# Mission of the Church 

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(Articles)

## By

## Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios

## Compiled by: Fr. Dr. T. P. Elias

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Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios

Compiled by
Fr. Dr. T. P. Elias

## Gregory of India Study Centre Kottayam

## Preface

It is a real privilege for me to write the preface of the book titled "Mission of the Church", dealing the life and teachings of the Late His Grace Metropolitan Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios of Malankara (Indian) Orthodox Syrian Church, as His Grace is my guide, mentor and an ideal role model. From the day I sought admission in Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam, where he was serving as the Principal in those days, I had been blessed to enjoy his overwhelming love, care and affection. Not only that, I got ample of chances to witness the depth and width of his unique wisdom on all subjects and topics available for human consideration. He had been well renowned across the globe, among people of various nationalities, faith, color, creed and walks of life as a thinker, writer, theologian, philosopher and great scholar He had been so unique in his thoughts, deeds and words, but still he maintained a very harmonious relationship with all people especially of low profile and means all over the world. Though he was a great scholar, he had no reservations or any sort of prejudices in dealing with people as well as organizations of various natures. He had a great and appreciable mind of love and care, especially for the poor and downtrodden in all the societies.

During the days when he was a layman till being a Metropolitan, he was so keen in keeping up his personal link with God Almighty in a very marvelous style and manner. He maintained a unique type of relationship with his creator as well as his fellow beings. When he served as the Private Secretary to H.H. Haily Sellasi, the then Emperor of Ethiopia, General Secretary of MGOCSM, the General Secretary and President of World Christian Council (WCC) Principal of Orthodox Theological Seminary and the First Metropolitan of the Diocese of Delhi of the Church, he was particular in discharging the assignments in a very super manner with the highest appreciations of one and all around. While holding these positions as well as many others, he felt always proud in being a true Christian and above all, a
blessed son of Indian Orthodox Church, one of the ancient Churches in the entire Christendom.

His Grace has authored a number of precious books, which are considered as treasures of wisdom by scholars and world leaders, both in the west and East. Mar Gregorios has earned a high position in the international world of thoughts and philosophy through his durable as well as reputed books and numberless enduring articles in the contemporary publications in different languages. The Institution which took birth as a result of His Grace's social commitment and desire to care the poor is known as Parimala Mar Gregorios Memorial Charitable Trust, Thalacode. Now it has grown as a large institution providing not only shelter, food, education to many deserving ones, but also rendering facilities for higher industrial training in Mar Gregorios Industrial Training Centre, advanced technical studies at Mar Gregorios Welding Technology Centre as well as the steady and ample spiritual growth at Mar Gregorios Chapel through regular prayers and meditations. I do praise Lord Almighty in enabling me to discharge the assignments as the President of PMGMC Trust, Thalacode, after the demise of Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios Metropolitan.

The book "Mission of the Church" is a compilation of four parts. The first part holds the 'Tribute to the World Citizen' as well as three articles of Late Lamented Mar Gregorios in English, the second part holds eight articles in Malayalam, authored by the venerable Metropolitan Dr. Mar Gregorios, the third part holds a Litany for peace composed by Dr. Mar Gregorios and the fourth part holds opinions of four eminent personalities on the life and vision of Dr. Mar Gregorios. In fact it is a noble and novel idea to introduce these to one and all who have never read them.

The articles in English starts with the 'Ministry of the Church two ways of understanding it' Dr. Mar Gregorios confirms that the divisions among Christians are due to doctrinal disagreement largely around to the nature of Christ, the sacramental mysteries of the Church and Ministry of the Church. In the article 'What is Prayer? Why pray? How pray' His Grace establishes that prayer is as essential as breathing and teaches the world how to pray and elaborates why to
pray. In 'Pray for the dead? Why ask the departed saints to pray for us, His Grace justifies and defends the ancient and long standing faith of all Holy Apostolic Churches, including our Holy Church.

In the Malayalam article, "Private prayers and common worship" His Grace emphatically establishes that we cannot separate prayers privately. We often pray to God who has redeemed us from sins. When we all have received baptism, we all are one in Lord Jesus. For a faithful, he or she cannot stay away from God. And hence our common prayers as well as private prayers are of equal importance and they are inseparable. In "Saints of Orthodox Churches and St. Gregorios of Parumala", he gives a very good explanation about the manner in which a Saint is canonized. Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios finds three qualities in St. Gregorios (Paumala Thirumeni) viz. 1) The Saint was a man of continuous prayer 2) The Saint was a great Master 3) the Saint was an ideal Shepherd.

In "Matrimony and Married life" His Grace quotes Hebrews 13:4, and states that there is nothing wrong to honor the married life, though the marriage and wedded life are only for this world. In the world to come, we all will be like angels. Married life is also a divine call as the call to the monastic life. The Holy Church cannot exist without the presence of the faithful who adopt both calls. In "Priesthood, its base and its sign" His Grace gives us a reasonable teaching about the details of the Priesthood. He is giving a better explanation for the priesthood of the entire faithful and its difference with the ordained priests. In the Holy Eucharist, Lord Jesus Himself is the celebrant and the entire faithful participates in it and hence they all are members of the royal priesthood family. At the same time the Episcopa celebrates the Holy Eucharist, in the place of Christ and if the Episcopa could not be there in a particular Church, he designates a priest in his place.

In "Holy Confession in tradition" His Grace introduces the right of the Church, the Apostolic tradition, the terms used for the Sacrament, confession to the Priest, and the tradition of the Holy church. In "Child baptism in the Christian faith" Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios submits ample of evidences from the Holy Scriptures and the traditions to establish that the child baptism is the right procedure.

He has succeeded in breaking all spear pins against the holy tradition of the child baptism. In 'Church and the Ladies', His Grace is trying to find an answer to the frequently presented allegation that the Holy Church is ignoring the ladies in the everyday functioning of the Church. In "Is adoration of the holy Cross idol worship" His Grace tells about the significance of the Holy cross and the beginning of the adoration, strongly advocates that the adoration of the Holy Cross is not at idol worship. He differentiates the Worship which is often offered to the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, one True God and adoration is often granted to His throne the Altar as well as the Holy Cross.

In the fourth part of the book, Mr. P. Govinda Pillai, an authority and creative critic of modern Malayalam literature, great thinker and philosopher examines the theological bases of Mar Gregorios in the Humanism and Socialism. His Grace Metropolitan Job Mar Philoxenos of Delhi Diocese, the successor of Mar Gregorios as the Diocesan Metropolitan, opens his mind and expresses his ideas about his predecessor in "Mar Gregorios, as I know him". His Grace Metropolitan Dr. Mathews Mar Themothios, of UK, Europe and Africa Diocese examines the Gregorian perspective of Human freedom impartially and states his well thought conclusion. Dr. Cherian Eapen, renowned scholar, writer and author, examines the life and visions of Mar Gregorios and tells us "I have no qualification to untie his shoes." The Tribute of Mr. Jose Kurian Puliyeril is good enough for the readers to get an instant and average awareness of Metropolitan, Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios and his gesture is highly appreciated.

This book is published by Gregory of India study centre as an attempt to keep up the memory of the Church Father ever memorable. I do appreciate the novel idea of all behind this publication, especially Rev. Fr Dr. T.P.Elias, who toiled a lot for the co-ordination and total compilation of the book, Mr. Joice Thottackad, who has already sacrificed a lot of time and energy for the research and attempt to bring light to the precious writings and documents of Mar Gregorios and had been instrumental for this book's publication.

The office bearers of the PMGMC Trust have succeeded in occupying 26 cents of land at a prime location in Thripunithura, (On
the Air Port - Sea Port High way) to construct an International Centre to retain the blessed memory of His Grace Metropolitan Dr. Mar Gregorios. I have immense pleasure to announce that the PMGMC Trust have planned to start an Old age home as well as a Centre as a monument of all the departed clergy and lay leaders who had joined hands with His Grace Mar Gregorios for the activities of PMGMC Trust. These are planned as an attempt to uphold the blessed memory of Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios, in the years to come. It is doubtless that His Grace Metropolitan Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios was a precious gift of God for the entire humanity and in particular for the faithful of His Grace's Mother Church. Let us praise God for the benevolent gift. Let me pay my humble but sincere homage to the sacred memory of our Church Father. I do appreciate the intention of the publishers in bringing out this book and with immense pleasure, I do present this book to all and wish wide publicity for this book in India and abroad. May more and more people get benefited and enriched in wisdom after going through the contents of the book. Let us pray for His Grace's soul's rest in peace and seek H.G's continued intercession for all of us.

## Metropolitan Geevarghese Coorilos

(Diocese of Mumbai)
President, PMGMC Trust, Thalacode, Ernakulam.

23 July 2009

## Metropolitan Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios: an ever memorable Philanthropist

His Grace Metropolitan Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios, well known and well recognized as a human being of international recognition who transcended East-West and North-South global boundaries and all levels of the society. His Grace could send his mind even into the farthest corners of the universe to care and love the down trodden irrespective of caste, creed and color. He cared deeply about the reality of daily life of those people and argued their cases at all levels wherever applicable. His care was so deep, and the sincerity for the same was so wide. His Grace has gifted his personal savings for the Boys home wide his last will duly registered on $1^{\text {st }}$ April 1993 in which it is said that "All the funds in my personal bank accounts in Delhi, including those in Citi Bank, State Bank of India, as well as the proceeds of any investment certificates, fixed deposits in individual companies and so on, shall be collected by Delhi Orthodox Diocesan Council and paid to the PMGMC Trust Thalacode to be utilized by that Trust for acquiring additional landed property and for developing the St. Mary's Boys' Home in Thalacode".

For instance, Metropolitan was moved by the sufferings of innocents of the society. In fact He was taking over St. Mary's Boys' Home at Thalacode in 1976 from Very. Rev. O.C. Kuriakose CorEpiscopa, who initially started it. Metropolitan founded a charitable Trust consisting of people from various walks of life for the daily functioning of the Boys Home. Thus Parimala Mar Gregorios Charitable Trust, Thalacode, Mulanthuruthy, Ernakulam, Kerala, India came into existence. Now the President is His Grace Metropolitan Gheevarghese Mar Coorilos, Diocese of Mumbai. Rev.Fr. K.T.Philip serves as the Director-cum-correspondent.

The Boys' Home takes cares of children providing food, shelter, clothing, education and above all mould them in becoming useful citizens of tomorrow. At Boys' Home the trust lays emphasis on the overall development of children. The essence is a life from neglect to recognition.

Some of the children who have come out from the portals of the Boys' Home are well placed Engineers, Doctors and leaders in various fields of life, both in India and abroad. Many of them visit the Boys' Home whenever possible and extend their timely helps for the daily needs of the Boys Home. The gestures are in fact a magnanimous and ideal response for the care they enjoyed while they were in.

For this noble venture, Metropolitan succeeded in getting support and help from generous people like Dr. Cherian Eapen, President Roy International Children's Foundation INC. etc. Now he serves as one of the Vice Presidents of the Trust.

The Trust under the leadership of Metropolitan Dr. Mar Gregorios assumed more productive dimensions for the Boys' Home. One among them is Mar Gregorios Industrial Training Centre affiliated to NCVT, Govt. of India which offers training for various trades such as Electrician, Fitter, and Draftsman Civil \& Mechanical, Plumber, AutoCAD and Computer. This educational and vocational training institute has shaped thousands of technicians who have succeeded as bread winners of their families since 1979.

For promoting women's welfare, a society was formed coordinating working arrangements of assembling their products with nearby MNC and State Level Companies such as M/s. Keltron, M/s. Guardian Controls, M/s. GBM and M/s. Vigil. Later a new venture, Paulose Mar Gregorios Techno -link did assembling of connectors for M/s. Framatome Connectors OEN Ltd. This project helped a lot in eradicating poverty and unemployment problems from the village homes to some extent.

Committed services of the Trust were carried out efficiently when and where Dr. Paulose Mar Gregoiros served as the President for more than two decades. It has paved the way for path-breaking changes among the beneficiaries of the Boys' Home and the society
at large. After the demise of the founder President of the Trust, the new president Metropolitan Geevarghese Mar Coorilose treads the path of our founder President Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios profusely. The trust is indebted for his unstained efforts and guidance. With his able leadership, we were able to construct "Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios Bhavan" for the accommodation of the inmates as well as convenient rooms for our distinguished guests, who are the friends of Metropolitan Dr. Paulose Mar Gregorios and the well-wishers of St. Mary's Boys' Home for their comfortable stay on their visits.

After the demise of this Philanthropist many voluntary organizations, individuals came forward to make sweaty remembrance of this Holy Father in different ways.

PMGMC Trust has planned to erect an old age home as well a centre as a monument of all the co-workers of Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios for the activities of the PMGMC Trust. The office bearers of the Trust have succeeded in purchasing twenty six cents of land in a prime location at Tripunithura; the birth place of late lamented Mar Gregorios, to erect a multistoried building as an International Centre and to dedicate the same to retain the blessed memory of Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios for ever and ever.

In this connection 'Gregory of India Study Centre' has set apart to publish a book named "Mission of the Church" which is a compilation of articles both in English and Malayalam authored by His Grace Mar Gregorios, as well as opinions of four eminent personalities on the life and vision of Mar Gregorios. A Litany for peace composed by Mar Gregorios is also added in the book. A tribute to Dr. Mar Gregorios by one of the beloved disciples of His Grace, Mr. Jose Kurian Puliyeril, of St. Gregorios Orthodox Society, Kottayam is added in the initial pages of the book. Thanks to Mr. Joice Thottakkad, of Gregory of India Study Centre is beyond words, who helped in the publication of this book. Heartfelt thanks to one and all who were instrumental in the publication of this book are expressed herewith.

# Tribute to a Prominent and Renowned World Citizen 

## (His Grace Metropolitan Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios)

Metropolitan Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios was born to Mr. T.P Paily and Mrs. Eli, Thadickal house, Thripunithura, Ernakulam, Kerala on $9^{\text {th }}$ Aug 1922. The new born was named Paul, who had four brothers. Mr. T.P. Paily was a primary teacher earning a very low income but all his children were given essential education. Paul had his school education at Government Boys High School, Thripunithura and in the School records he was T. Paul Varghese. He was good in studies and always stood first in the examinations. He was considered as the best student of the School in academics. Paul passed the Matriculation exam in first class in 1937. Though he was qualified for his higher studies with scholarship, he obeyed his father's desire to look for a means to support the financial condition of the family. He used to visit the Public Library in his locality and read all books available there.

In his young age, Paul Varghese had very little dreams and desires. He had a special concern about his father, who was struggling to meet the day to day expenses of the family, especially when his mother fell ill and the treatment caused additional expenses. Paul used to shed tears in private and beseech to God Almighty to show God's will and way. He had strong and staunch faith in the providence of God Almighty. It was the beginning of the mystic experience in his life throughout. He was regular and interested for the Sunday school classes. The Holy Bible, presented to him by his mother served to provide consolations while meditating. In the childhood itself he was attracted to the priestly life. At the same time he longed sincerely to serve the poor and needy in his future. He took up a job as a freelance journalist in 1937 and continued the same till 1942. In 1942 he appeared the civil service exam and qualified himself for an appointment in Post and Telegraph Dept. He continued the job for five years and in
the mean time he was promoted as a Post Master. Only because of his affair for the oppressed, suppressed and exploited, he became active in the trade union activities and had held the position of Secretary of P \& T employees union (Kochi Circle).

During those days Paul got a chance to meet Dr. R.N. Thomson, Director of Provincial Schools, Imperial Ethiopian Government, who had reached Kochi to recruit few teachers. As Paul Varghese could impress the foreigner with his talents, wisdom and proficiency, he got appointment as a teacher, even though he was not a graduate at that time. Hence he reached Ethiopia in November 1947. When he worked as a teacher from 1947 till 1950, he learned the local language 'Amharic' and became a veteran in the language. As a result he was appointed as the Chairman of Elementary Amharic language and later as the chairman of Haily Sellasi Secondary Schools in Addis Ababa. He prepared a grammar book for the language and still the same is honored as authentic. Once he got a chance to make a public address in the presence of Emperor Haily Selassi in fluent and impressive Amharic language. And the Emperor appointed Paul Varghese as his Personal Advisor. Sooner Paul Varghese gained the trust, faith and friendship of the Emperor. Though the Emperor offered citizenship and highest position in his personal staff, it was not acceptable to Paul Varghese, as he had realized his vocation to serve the Church of God.

From 1950 to 53 he spent time in USA, gaining degrees and Post Graduate certificates, in different subjects especially in Theology, Philosophy etc, from different Universities. When he returned to Kerala, he was appointed as the Bursar of the Fellowship House, Alwaye. Later he joined the faculty of Orthodox Theological Seminary, at Kottayam. In the meantime he was appointed as the General Secretary of Syrian Christian Student Movement and the current name MGOCSM, was accepted during those days. During 1955 and 1956 he had served as the associate Secretary of SCM, an ecumenical student's organization. Paul Varghese got one more chance to go to Ethiopia in 1956. When H.H. Haily Selassi visited Kerala, he was once again appointed as a member of the Royal Personal staff in a high position. Due to his desire to serve the Holy Church, he came back to Kerala in 1958.

Paul Varghese was much worried over the factional fights in the Church. But as and when the perfect peace was re-established all over the Church in 1958, his personal joy knew no bounds. So he confirmed his vocation firmly and accepted the ordination as Deacon at Kuruppampadi Church in 1959. On 2 ${ }^{\text {nd }}$ November 1961 he was ordained as priest named Rev. Fr. Paul Varghese. He left for Yale and Oxford Universities for his higher studies especially in the theology advocated and practiced by the great Capadocian Fathers, St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory of Nyssa, and St. Gregory of Nazianzen. When Fr. Paul Varghese was a Research Fellow at Oxford, he could serve as the General Secretary of WCC, Member of the Central Committee, Executive Committee, and Commission of Faith and Order of WCC. In addition to all these, he was the leader of the WCC delegations to UNESCO in 1966. He was the leader of WCC delegations to heads of African states in 1968, the leader of WCC delegation to UN Gen Assembly on disarmament in '83 and '88, as well as leader of various delegations to many countries in the west and east. He was a leader and guide of so many international organizations like joint working group WCC and RC Church, Oriental Orthodox Church unofficial conversations in many years, etc. He was the member of Senates of various Universities in India and abroad at the same time.

In 1967 he took up the charge of the Principal, Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam. His continuous efforts and farsightedness enabled the Seminary for its growth as full-fledged institution with modern amenities and facilities. The Sophia centre, Orthodox Church Archives, Divya Bhodhanam (Divine instructions for the Laity) Refresher courses for Priests, Publication of books on faith etc are the fruits of his long cherished dreams.

In Feb '75, Fr. Paul Varghese along with four other prominent priests of the Church were elevated as Rambans (Monks) at St. Mary's Cathedral, Puthencavu and on the next day they five were consecrated as Metropolitans at St. Mary's Orthodox Church Niranam. He was named His Grace Metropolitan. Paulos Mar Gregorios. His Grace took charge as the first Metropolitan of Delhi Diocese on $11^{\text {th }}$ Jul ' 75 . From the very first day His Grace did his best to spread the brightness, beauty of the visions and the ancient
culture of the Holy Church in the capital city of India. Within a short span of time, he could erect a Head Quarters for the Church in the city, named Orthodox Church Centre in a very attractive and prominent place. He had a soft mind to one and all. He had respect to the political party activists, philosophers, social leaders and all such had considered him as a friend. He had friends and well wishers, young and old, from all walks of life in the national as well as international levels, irrespective of caste, creed, and color. Those who were in high positions of political, social and religious fields, used to consult him for the solution of many of the critical problems faced by them. He was good enough to advise the ones in top administrative cadres in the public and private sectors to take proper and wise decisions.

When he was elected as the President of WCC, he could shine well as a good administrator and an angel of peace and fraternity. The services rendered by him for the world peace and for the development of the third world countries are always appreciated by all. He had great concern for the high values of secularism. He had seen the religion through the brightness of love to humanity. He stood for the mutual recognition and mutual respect among all the world religions. His ideas formed from the prophetic farsightedness have showered energy to the world in the form of intelligence and wisdom. He had favored all the progressive movements across the globe. He always felt proud to be a Keralite/Malayalee and he served well as a messenger of peace, love and care to the humanity. He always preferred free analysis and free thinking, while in debates, seminars, dialogues and discussions with individuals or groups. He was a guide for all the justice seekers. His books and articles in various languages were good enough to support this cause. He had traveled a lot across the globe to popularize the need for a unique system of justice and peace.

He was brave enough to be a critic of the drawbacks of the western thoughts, philosophy, theology and visions and he always upheld the greatness in the eastern thoughts and visions. Through his books, writings and lectures, he could introduce the richness of the Eastern Spirituality to the west and westerners. The opinion appeared in the New York Times on his book "Enlightenment East and West"
itself is enough to prove it. He had convened so many conferences to find solutions for the social and political problems in the third world countries. He was in the forefront for the liberation of the undeveloped countries and the suppressed mankind.

He had cared the growth and development of the entire Church. For some time he has served as the Deputy Chairman of Kolencherry Medical Mission. He had a wonderful aptitude to learn foreign languages. The proficiency in various foreign languages helped him to win the hearts of listeners and readers. He was a giant in the wisdom of Theology, Marxism, Nuclear Physics, Genetics, Engineering and Philosophical subjects. The Rationalists, Logicians, Atheists and those who oppose religions have respected and are still honoring his ideas and teachings. He made the literal meaning of his name 'Gregorios' meaningful. (Literally it means one who is awake)

He has written about 30 books in English, and a few books in French and German, and about ten books in Malayalam. There are translations of his books in many foreign languages.

## Biographical references of His Grace could be traced in the following:

Dictionary of International Biography
International Who's who
Who's who in America
National register of Prominent Americans and
international notables
Who's who in Switzerland
Who's who in Fareast
World who's who
India who's who
Kerala who's who
International who's who of intellectuals
International Authors and writers who's who
Dictionary of International community service men
of Achievement
Men of Achievement
Men and women of distinction
International directory of Distinguished Scholarship

Five thousand Personalities of the world
The international book of Humor
International directory of distinguished Leadership
Who's who in Religion
Five hundred Leaders of influence
His Grace is the recipient of the following Honors, Prizes, and Awards.

- Doctor of Theology (Honoris cais) Leningrad Theological Academy, USSR.
- Dr. Theol (h.c) :Lutheran Theological Academy, Budapest, Hungary
- Dr. Theol (h.c) Jan Hus Faculty Prague, Czechoslovakia
- Hall of Fame Award for Extra Ordinary Service in peace and Human unity, USA.
- Order of St. Vladimir USSR
- Order of St. Serguis, First Rank USSR
- Order of St. Mary Magdeline Poland
- Order of Bishop Fransiszek Hodur, First class, Poland
- Man of the Year Award Biographical Institute, 1990, USA
- Golden Academy award for life time Achievement ABA USA, 1991
- Acharya Award India 1992
- Otto Nuschike Prize for Peace, Germany 1988
- Soviet Land Nehru Award, India 1988
- The International Biographical Roll of Honor for distinguished service to world unity and understanding among Religions, USA
- The Distinguished Leadership Award for Extra Ordinary service to Peace and Human Unity, USA
- Bhai Param Vir Singh International Award, India, 1990
- Distinguished Alumnus Award, Princeton Theological Seminary, UAE, 1992
- Oskar Pifister Award American Psychiatric Association, USA 1992
- Culture for Service Award, Goshen College USA 1992

His Grace had a number of Scholars and thinkers as friends in Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism as well as in all other world religions.

When there were dialogues between Muslims all over the world, His Grace was there as a leader of the Christian side. Like wise he had been a leader of Christians when dialogues were there with all other religions. The great leaders of each religion who got a chance at least once in their lives to meet him do remember the greatness and glory of this unique leader of Christianity. The Parishes and Congregations in UAE are attached to the Diocese of Delhi. And whenever His Grace visited either one of these parishes, our people got a chance to witness the great concern and respects to their beloved Metropolitan from the Muslim leaders of the Islamic world.

His mastery over different languages enabled him to mesmerize the minds of his listeners as well as readers of various parts of the world. His Grace's mastery over modern western and eastern visions of Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, vision of modern science and technology, Politics of various countries, co-habitations of cultures varying in nature, phenomenon like Marxism, wealth distribution, educational system etc, was a miraculous experience for many who watched them closely. So it was quite easy for His Grace Mar Gregorios to moderate meetings and seminars held individually and jointly by world famous scientists, scholars, thinkers and philosophers on several occasions and venues. Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios was a veteran of the knowledge in humanities, science and religion. He used to uphold the freedom of mankind in a quite distinguished way and style. In one of his books he wrote "man is not only the image of God, but also he recapitulates in himself the cosmos being a micro cosmos." In his version the man has been created and made settled in the world to care, love and transform the universe to its perfection and not at all for the destruction of what is there in the nature.

Being an architect of Ecumenism, he was in the forefront of the leaders who had struggled for the unity and understanding among different religions as well as Christian denominations in India and abroad. There was a time when western Theologians and Church leaders knew the Indian Orthodox Church as the mother Church of HG Dr. Mar Gregorios.

Dr. Mar Gregorios, often revered as 'a world citizen' by many in India and abroad alike, always had a great desire to implement his personal thirst to help the poor, orphans, destitute and downtrodden
and his care and ardent love to serve the poor enabled him to establish the St. Mary's boys home, at Thalakode, Ernakulam District under a Trust named after the first canonized saint of the Church. It is known as Parimala Mar Gregorios memorial charitable Trust...It is a fact that the institution has grown fast not only as a Boys home catering the needs of food, shelter and education, but also as a centre of higher education and vocational training in many fields for poor and the needy.

Though His Grace had a partial stroke on his right side while being at Germany, he used to be as energetic and smart in his routines moving here and there on the wheel chair. He was so particular to appear before public in perfect pleasant face and appearance, though he had physical pains or discomforts. He found more time to write more articles and letters. He was so particular to reply the personal mails in hundreds then and there. On the days prior to $24^{\text {th }}$ November 1996, he was so energetic. He had plans for the days to come. On $24^{\text {th }}$ November 1966 , his soul left for the heavenly abode. Though he was rushed to the Bathra Hospital near the Orthodox Centre upon noticing some sort of discomfort for His Grace, the attempts to retain the life failed unfortunately.

The mortal remains was carried in a decorated chariot and was taken for the "Nagari Kanikkal" a routine honor for the departed Bishops and Priests through the streets of New Delhi and after the payment of homage in the Capital city and Churches there, the mortal remains were carried in a special fight to Kochi. From Kochi it was carried to Kottayam Orthodox Theological Seminary in another decorated chariot. On the way from Kochi to Kottayam Seminary, people of all walks of life and faith crowded on both sides of the street to pay their last homage to the world citizen. Many faithful followed the chariot in their cars as procession. When the mortal remains were taken to the crypt by the priests, others sang the hymn:
"Leaving the perished world,
attained the eternal life..."
When the mortal remains of Mar Gregorios was kept in the crypt after the completion of the prayers His Holiness the Catholicos, H.B, the Catholicose Designate, other Bishops and Priests poured incense
in to the crypt covering the body of the great lover of mankind from the sight of the world for ever and ever. The name of whom was the burning torch of world peace and love for humanity was transformed as a memory. All who were there prayed: "Lord grant him a place in your right side, in the laps of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob'. Let us continue our prayers for the great asset of the Church and seek His Grace's continued intercession for us all.

Immediately after the demise of His Grace Metropolitan Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios, His Grace Metropolitan Geevarghese Mar Coorilos, resumed the duties and responsibilities of the President of PMGMC Trust as per the decision of the Holy Synod of the Church. A two storied building complex having rooms for accommodation of the inmates, visitors, officials, dining rooms, kitchen etc has been erected and named "Paulos Mar Gregorios Bhavan", a sacred monument for the long standing memory of the founder President. The enthusiasm and hard work rendered by the current President and other office bearers of PMGMC Trust in contacting their personal friends as well as well wishers of the Boys Home for the needed fund collection and support is really praise worthy. Recently the office bearers of PMGMC Trust have succeeded in purchasing 26 cents of land in a prime location in Tripunithura, the birthplace of late lamented Mar Gregorios, to erect a multistoried building as an international center and to dedicate the same to retain the blessed memory of the prominent world citizen, for ever and ever.

For and on behalf of all who loved His Grace and all who retained a bright memory of the Great Church Father, may I offer humble homage before the shining and glittering memory. Let it be a true tribute to the great world citizen, who shined as the brightest Star of the East.

Jose Kurian Puliyeril

Senior Advisor, St. Gregorios Orthodox Society
Kottayam.
$23^{\text {rd }}$ Jul 09

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## PART 1

## English Articles

## 1

## The Ministry of the Church Two ways of understanding it

One thing has become clear in the course of ecumenical discussion. What now divides Christians is not a difference in the description of the Holy Trinity or of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. Doctrinal disagreement centres largely around the nature of the church, the sacramental mysteries of the church, and the ministry of the church.

These differences have their source primarily in our understanding of and attitude to reality as a whole. In our time, we who are the product of an educational system shaped by western civilisation, are very much the victims of the Enlightenment. We have learned a particular way of reasoning, based on logical demonstrability and functional usefulness as the most important criteria for argument. The Christian theology shaped by that rationality partakes of all the defects of that way of looking at things.

This way leads to a cleavage in our understanding and thinking. Some of us like to think in terms which can be clearly rational, and seek only that which is functionally efficient and useful. This is a way of thinking inherited from western civilisation through the educational system, and it has important consequences for our culture as for our faith.

The clearest evidence of this victimisation by western civilisation occurs in the area of art. Our perceptions about reality are more deeply expressed in art, music, sculpture and architecture than in our rational discourse. We have today become poor in art and architecture, in music and painting, primarily because, following western civilization, we have put more emphasis on logical discourse and functional utility, and abandoned our own artistic creativity for the sake of
a very superficial rationality. This affects our perceptions of God, of the Incarnation, of the Church, and of its ministry and sacraments. We have today a functional understanding of the Church and of its sacraments, primarily in terms of their usefulness understood in rational terms. Our document on the Ministry, which we are discussing today (BEM, Faith \& Order Paper III) suffers from the same defect, though it strives hard to state in logical terms some of the classical perceptions about the nature of the Church and her sacramental ministry and mysteries.

The document speaks about the "authority and responsibility" (9) of ministers, but it does also speak of the ministers' presence which "reminds the community of the divine initiative act" (12)x .

A proper treatment of the ministry and the sacramental mysteries should deal with both of these aspects - (a) meaning and (b) function. But (a) should not be in terms of (b) alone.

The document does speak about (a), but since this is not an area where we have a complete consensus, the document is hesitant and ambivalent. The two key paragraphs which describe the meaning and function of the ordained ministry are brief and worth citing here in full:
13. The chief responsibility of the ordained ministry is to assemble and build up the body of Christ by proclaiming and teaching the Word of God, by celebrating the sacraments, and by guiding the life of community in its worship, its mission and its caring ministry.
14. It is especially in the eucharistic celebration that the ordained ministry is the visible focus of the deep and all-embracing communion between Christ and the members of his body. In the celebration of the Eucharist, Christ gathers, teaches and nourishes the Church. It is Christ who invites to the meal and who presides at it. In most churches this presidency is signified and represented by an ordained minister.

The two under-lined words are of crucial significance, for the
churches which follow the ancient tradition. The signifying and representative character of the ordained minister is the major disagreement among our churches.

The differences relate to the questions:
(a) What is represented?
(b) How is it represented?
(c) Under what conditions is it represented?
(a) What is represented?

According to the document it is "the presidency" that is signified. Those who adhere to the ancient tradition would say that the "presence of Christ" is signified, not merely as "president", but also as High Priest, as Prophet, as Messiah King and Pastor. We would also say that this presence is signified not only at the Eucharist, but throughout the life of the Church and of the ordained minister within it. But for those churches which do not recognize the Eucharist as participation in Christ's once-for-all sacrifice, the concept of Christ as High Priest, and his sacramental presence in the Eucharist, may not make much sense. In the document's discussion of the Eucharist, the sacrificial character of the Eucharist is recognized, but in terms like the 'great sacrifice of praise' (Eucharist 4), reducing the sacrifice to praise alone. When sacrificial words like 'offer' are used, they refer mainly to praise and prayer, but not to sacrifice as such.

For the ancient tradition, the person of the bishop in the church and in its eucharistic sacrifice signifies more than 'presidency'. He signifies sacramentally the eternal High Priest, Christ Himself, offering his own life (body and blood) to God the Father. The commentary 1:(8) on the Eucharist document refers to the Catholic understanding of the Eucharist as "propitiatory sacrifice" and calls on the churches to "review the old controversies about 'sacrifice' and deepen their understanding of the reasons why other traditions than their own have either used or rejected this term". The document on the Eucharist then goes on to recognize the sacrificial character of the Eucharist in para 10: "In Christ we offer ourselves as a living and holy sacrifice in our daily lives", but it cannot say that we do so primarily in the Eucha-
rist, and only derivatively in our daily lives.
This hesitancy in the Eucharist document carries over into the Ministry document. The concepts of sacramental presence and sacrifice are smuggled in, so to speak, in the Eucharist document (see e.g. Eucharist 6 ), and when it comes to the Ministry document, they almost fade out. As usual, the central idea of sacrifice, not acceptable to the "enlightened", is relegated in the ministry document also, to the commentary. In 2:(17), the commentary says "the priesthood of Christ and the priesthood of the baptized have in their respective ways the function (emphasis added) of sacrifice and intercession. As Christ has offered himself, Christians offer their whole being as 'living sacrifice'."

This is good as far as it goes, except for that lousy word 'function' which has crept in. But it is only in the commentary and not in the main body of the Ministry document which of course means that we have no consensus among the churches on this point.

We return to the question: What is signified in the presence of the ordained minister in the Eucharist and in the life of the Body of Christ? The document says, "this presidency, signified and represented by an ordained Minister, is a sacramental presence of Christ the High Priest, the Perfect Prophet and the Messianic shepherd-King (pastor) in the life of the Church".

What does 'sacramental presence' mean? To that we now turn.
(b) How is it represented?

The mode of Christ's presence in his body has to understood in sacramental terms, and that is why ordination is a sacramental mystery in the ancient tradition.

But the terms 'sacramental mystery' and 'sacramental presence' are themselves subject to misunderstanding and misuse. 'Sacramental mystery' is a concocted term, half Latin, half Greek. In Hebrew Aramaic or Greek, there is no word for sacrament. Sacrament is therefore not a biblical word. In Latin it was a legal term for a pledge, a security deposit of money, a forfeit deposited in court as guarantee of bonafides. It also came to mean a military recruit's pledge and
oath, an oath of allegiance.
The Western Church began using this word to mean signs of Christ's pledge and promise - in the Eucharist, in the Baptism and in other symbolic actions of the Church. It was adopted as equivalent of the Semitic term raze' d' idtha (roze d' idtho if you want the West Syrian pronunciation), which in Greek is tamyskria tes ekklesias, in Malayalam (sabhayude mauilka rahasyangal). But it was assimilated in the western concept to the idea of a pledge or guarantee of a promise, which is the sense in which Luther takes it.

In the ancient tradition, a mysterion is a community participation in the hidden counsels of God, an initiation into the will of God as known in the community; but this is more than just a cognitive unsealing of a hidden secret. It is a transforming experience in which one is assimilated into the Kingdom of God as present on earth, into that company of the holy ones on earth and in the heavens (i.e. beyond the horizon of our senses).

When we then re-adopt the Latin term sacramentum in a phrase like the "sacramental mysteries of the Church", we mean something that makes real the community's transforming participation in the heavenly reality of the Kingdom through earthly experiences like Baptism, Chrismation, Eucharist, Ordination, absolution, marriage, and the anointing of the sick.

It is in relation to a concept like 'sacramental mysteries of the Church' that we use the other term, the "Sacramental Presence of Christ, the High Priest and Good Shepherd in the Church". The episcopal college in the local church, i.e. the bishop with the presbyters and deacons, constitutes a sacramental presence of Christ the High Priest and Good Shepherd in his Church. All members of the body of Christ participate in this priestly and pastoral ministry of Christ; but the ordained episcopal college represents Christ with his apostles and disciples in a special way, a visible, consecrated presence within the Church, through persons specially set apart by special laying on of hands and invocation of the Holy spirit.

It is this mode of presence that constitutes the specificity of the ordained clergy - not just their function, authority and responsibility,
but their presence itself. It was a distortion of the real agreement when the ecumenical movement began focussing an 'Apostolic Succession' as the central issue. The real debate is about the "ordained episcopal college as sacramental presence of Christ the Good Shepherd in His church".

This mode always transcends the rational, moves into the realm beyond our senses where our rational conceptual framework must fall to pieces if not transcended. This is a fundamental philosophical question - the mode of Christ's presence experienced in trans-rational categories. The BEM document as a whole is plagued by the conflict between its genuine desire to be loyal to the authentic tradition of the Church on the one hand, and the attempt to explain that heritage in the rational-functional categories of the post-Enlightenment western civilisation.

Until the concept of "sacramental mysteries of the Church" is clarified and in relation to that the other term "sacramental presence of Christ" is interpreted, any attempt to explain the ministry in purely rational-functional and missiological terms would be seen by the authentic tradition as woefully inadequate.
(c) Under what conditions?

The conditions under which this sacramental presence can be authentic need to be discussed.

1. First of all, a sacramental Presence, separated from Him of whom it is the presence, loses its authenticity. It is only in sacramental union with Christ that the sacramental presence lives. In this way it is different from sign or symbol.
2. Second, the Sacramental Presence is not a gift of the spirit for the individual bishop, presbyter or deacon, but something given for the Church, for its oikodone or upbuilding. Hence the Sacramental Presence becomes inauthentic when its integral relation to the whole community is broken. It is only in communion with the priesthood of the whole Church and on its foundation that the Sacramental Presence lives. In the Eastern tradition, the anointing of a bishop takes place at the time of his baptism, when he enters into participation in
the Priest-Shepherd ministry of Christ. There is no reanointing at the time of ordination. The priesthood of the whole church, in which all baptized-chrismated men, women and children participate, is the foundation and the milieu for the sacramental presence of Christ.
3. Third, the sacramental presence of Christ in the Bishop, Presbyter and Deacon, cannot be exhaustively explained in terms of their functions alone. Their very person, body and mind, soul and spirit, is consecrated to be that presence. There is thus no "retirement" possible. One continues to be that presence so long as one lives. The person of the Bishop, Priest and Deacon is consecrated; not just their function. This is a major point of disagreement between the older traditions and the new rational-functional approach of much modern theology.

## The Ministry of Women

The other major element of disagreement relates to the ministry of women in the Church. There is agreement on the following points

* In Christ there is neither male nor female; all are alike members of the Body of Christ and participate in the Priestly-Pastoral ministry of Christ as full members of the Body of Christ. This applies also to all baptized and chrismated children.
* There is nothing in the tradition of the Church, despite the instruction of St. Paul to the Corinthians, that forbids the teaching ministry to women. The tradition does not say that women are not allowed to proclaim the Kingdom or to exercise the ministry of pastorally up-building each other.
* In the long history of the Church, till very recent times, no woman has been consecrated as a bishop. We do not know of many women who were presbyter(s) in local parishes. We know about deaconesses in the Bible as well as in later times.
* When Christ appointed the Twelve, they were all males possibly because they represented the Patriarchs of Twelve Tribes of the New Israel.
* We know about several apostles who were not of the

Twelve- St. Paul, for example, as well as Andronicus and Junias (Rom 16:7) and perhaps James. But we do not know of a woman Apostle, though there must have been several women among those who were eye witnesses to the Resurrection of Christ - including Mary Magdalene (the first witness) and Joanna and Mary (Luke 24:9). We had women prophets (Lk.2:36, Rev.2:20) but no women Apostles of whom we know.

* We know that the arrangement made by the apostles in all the churches which they established was to set up a group of-male elders with a presiding male episkopos. This apostolic pattern has continued for nearly 2000 years without being questioned. For these traditions that put some weight on tradition, this is heavy weight indeed.

Our BEM document seems to take the attitude: "the less said the better" on this issue. The second part of para 18 is very cursory treatment of the question indeed. The commentary on para 18 makes some cryptic allusions to the "nature of humanity and. . .Christology" which are far from clear. The document would have been much more useful if the case had been more adequately presented on both sides.

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## Forms of the Ordained Ministry

As for the forms of the Ordained Ministry, the document nostalgically regrets that "there is no single New Testament Pattern", as if the function of the New Testament were to set down patterns for the ordering of the Church. The Apostles set down certain patterns for the Ministry, and the Church has, throughout the centuries, made many changes and adaptations without (except in some cases) abandoning the basic three-fold pattern. The document recommends the threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter and deacon as "an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it" (22), though the pattern "stands evidently in need of reform".

There are many other areas like Apostolic succession and Ordina-
tion as Sacrament, where the document heroically tries to satisfy the Reformed and at the same time to be faithful to the authentic tradition. The success in this regard is commendable, but certainly not total.

There is no dealing with the thorny problem that theologically understood, no person can offer himself or herself as a candidate for the ministry. It is the Spirit and the Community of faith that chooses and calls. In our systems this aspect has become largely nominal.

For one who has laboured long with previous drafts of the Ministry documents this last version marks enormous improvement. As a discussion starter, this is a good document, except for its defects pointed out in the first part of this paper.
x This idea of the Minister as a "Reminder" is expressed, from a very limited point of view, in H.J.M. Nouwen, The Living Reminder, New York, Seabosy, 1977

## 2

## What is Prayer? Why Pray? How Pray?

## 1. What is Prayer?

Prayer is like breathing. Without breathing we cannot live. When we breathe, air enters our lungs, cleanses the blood in our veins by relieving it of the carbon dioxide, and supplying it with oxygen. If I do not breathe for a few minutes I die. When I have hard physical work to do, I need more air than when I am sleeping or sitting in a chair.

Fortunately God has so ordained that we do not die spiritually just because we have failed to pray for sometime. But where there is no prayer sin accumulates and the proper functioning of the spiritual life becomes obstructed. And if you have important spiritual work to do you need more prayer than otherwise. Only those who pray constantly are exercising their spiritual muscles.

Prayer is communion or communication with God -opening ourselves to Him and receiving His love. It is by living consciously in this relationship of love that we can be transformed into the image of God. By prayer we become more like God, more loving, more wise, more powerful, more kind and good.

In prayer we are cleansed of the accumulated impurities of our life and we are supplied with power to live a good, kind and holy life.

Prayer is not a matter of asking God for all kinds of things. Some teen-agers speak to their earthly father only when they need money. We should not become like them in relation to our heavenly Father going to Him only when we need something. The relationship is valuable in itself, as in all true love. It is not what we get out of it that matters, but the fact that we are in communion with our loving Heavenly Father.

## 2. Why Pray?

Does not God know what we need, even before we ask him? Why does He want us to ask? Does prayer change God's will in any way? Can my prayer change the future that God has already determined?

These are legitimate questions that need to be answered. The Bible says clearly 'your Father knows what you need before you ask Him' (St. Mathew 6:8). But God wants that we know what is good for others as well as for ourselves. God wants that our will should not incline towards evil, but desire the good with deep yearning. Prayer is therefore a way of training the will to desire the good, as well as of turning our wills towards the highest concentration of all good, namely God.

Prayer is thus a way of becoming good by using our freedom to turn towards the good and to will the good. By prayer we become like God. God is good and wills the good. We should also become like God in willing and desiring what is good. By communion with God we also learn to desire the good which God also desires.

God said: 'Let there be light' and there was light. And God saw that the light was good (Gen. 1:3-4). What God willed became reality. We are to become like God. So we must also acquire the capacity to will the good, and it will happen as we desire, when we become more and more like God. Prayer is an expression of our will in desiring the good and realising it. When we are delivered from selfishness, pride, and evil desires, our prayers will become more like the creative Word of God, which merely by saying 'let there be light' can create light.

God has made us partakers of His own divine nature. He has called us to share in God's own glory and excellence (2 Pet. 1:4). When we trust in God and live a life of discipline, prayer, worship, virtue, knowledge, godliness, brotherly affection and love (2 Pet. 1:58), we are transformed into God's likeness and share in His divine power. God wants us to have a part in the task of shaping this world through prayer and knowledge and work.

By prayer we do change reality. God has given us that power. But
this power is not available to us until we become more godlike. That is why the prayers of the saints are more effective than our own prayer - because they are more god like than we are. If the power to change the world by our will is in the hands of evil men, they will make the world evil. We have to grow in the capacity for prayer by developing the habits of prayer and loving service.

And our prayers should not be selfish. In prayer the first focus is God. The second focus is other people. Only in the third place should we ask things for ourselves. In the Lord's Prayer all the first petitions are focused on God - His name, His kingdom, His will. This is the way our prayer should also be. We pray that God's purposes may be established in the lives of all people, that evil may be banished from the earth, that all men may live together in peace and justice, praising God the centre and source of all good. Even in the prayers that ask for daily food, for forgiveness and for protection from evil, the first person singular (I, me) is not used in the Lord's Prayer. We ask things for us, for all men.

When we all pray with love and faith, without selfishness or pride, our prayer changes things. God has more laws than the laws of physical science. He can make prayer achieve 'miracles' of healing and transformation which cannot be explained by medical science. Our science knows only some of God's laws. Prayer is also subject to certain laws. It is the same power of God which operates in the scientific realm, and in the realm of prayer.

In prayer, we are never alone. Not even alone with God. Especially in group prayer, we commemorate all those who are members of the Body of Christ, for it is as a member of the Body that we pray, and the other members are always with us. This is why we commemorate the Prophets, Apostles, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Martyrs, the Saints, the great Teachers and all the faithful departed and all the faithful living.

## 3. How Pray?

Prayer has to be learned. It is like swimming. When you are first thrown into the water, yo may sink. You then may think that the law of gravity is final and cannot be changed. But there are other laws,
like those of buoyancy and motion. The mere knowledge of these laws cannot teach you to swim. One jumps in and slowly, by repeated practice, acquires the skills of remaining afloat and of moving on the surface of or under the water. And some people are more skillful swimmers than others, because they have learned the rules and acquired the skills by constant practice.

The first rule in prayer as in swimming, is not to give up just because you do not succeed in the first three or four attempts. Prayer is a spiritual skill to be acquired by constant practice.

The second rule, again as in swimming is to 'let go', to let the water support you, to be unanxious and relaxed. In prayer also we have to let ourselves go, relax, trust in God to support you and teach you how to pray.

The third rule is to keep up the practice, even if you do not feel like it, or enjoy it. In the life of prayer, our inherent love of sensual pleasures and our selfish love of laziness and comfort, will interfere to make us reluctant to keep up the practice, finding various excuses for not praying. There is no use saying 'I don't feel like praying' or 'I do not get anything from it.' It will take years before you get the habit of prayer and really begin to enjoy it. One must strengthen the will to have control over the laziness of the body and the desires of the flesh if one is to make progress in the art and skill of prayer. There is nothing like regular practice which can teach you to pray.

A fourth rule, closely connected with the third, is: develop the discipline of prayer through fasting and self-control. Man does not become free and good like God until he learns to control his own inner drives and passions. Restraint of hunger and thirst, of anger and jealousy, of sexual passion, of the desire for glory and flattery, of the desire for bodily excitement and for sensual stimulation, and of all inner turbulences which make us do things against our own free will, is a necessary preparation for prayer. As good athletes competing for the Olympic Games go through very rigorous self discipline in order to keep their body, muscles and nerves in good condition, so should the man of prayer keep his body, mind and spirit and good condition and under conscious control.

A fifth rule is to use our whole body and even material things in the service of prayer. Prayer is an act of the whole man, body, soul and spirit - not simply an act of the mind. The body can participate in prayer through posture, speech, and acts:
(a) Posture - In our Eastern tradition, the posture for prayer in standing, facing east, with arms uplifted or folded in adoration and worship.
(b) Focus - It is good to have a focal point outside - a cross with two candles on each side, icons or pictures of Christ, of the Blessed Virgin Mother and of the Saints, or even a more elaborate prayer altar fixed in some part of the house, where the whole family assembles for prayer. Crucifixes, i.e. crosses with the representation of the crucified body of Christ on it, belong to the Western tradition and are not to be encouraged in our tradition. In choosing pictures, it is best to use eastern icons. Pictures with the sacred heart of Christ or of the Virgin Mother are to be avoided, because these belong to a particular period in Latin piety and are not helpful for a balanced spirituality.
(c) Lips and Mouth - The body must pray - not merely the mind. Let your lips and mouth sing the praises of God, even if your mind does not always follow. The act of the lips and mouth is also your act of prayer, even without the concentration. Singing is better than saying your prayers, for in the very music certain human attitudes and aspirations are expressed.
(d) Wandering of the mind - Do not get anxious about the wandering of your mind. When you become aware that your mind is wandering, bring it back by consciously offering your wandering mind also to God. It is part of our confession about ourselves. "This is what I am Lord, distracted and unable to concentrate. I offer myself to Thee as I am. Take my wandering and distracted mind, and heal it by Thy grace." God will forgive you and transform you gradually.
(e) Gestures - Use the gestures of prostration, bowing the head, making the sign of the cross, and giving the kiss of peace. Words are not the only means of expression we have. Folding the hands and
bowing is a sign of adoration, and of waiting for a blessing. Lifting up your hands with palms open, can mean petition, penitence, and intercession. Prostration is like Sashtangapranama, the sign of complete surrender and submission, placing yourselves in the hands of God with full trust. Making the sign of the cross is a way of reminding ourselves that we have been saved by the Cross of Christ, in fact crucified with Christ. Keep your three fingers together (thumb, index and middle fingers) to touch the forehead (symbolizing the Trinity, the source of all life and all good) and make a descending motion to the lower side of your chest to signify the descent of the Son of God from heaven to earth for our salvation, then take your fingers from your left arm to your right arm signifying both the horizontal arm of the cross, and the fact that we who were on the left as children of darkness, have now been brought to the right side of God as children of light. Giving the kiss of peace is the symbol of mutual forgiveness and love, and it is a time for us to overcome all feelings of bitterness or anger against members of the family or others outside.

All these signs are part of a language which goes much deeper than words and transforms our sub-conscious minds which words can seldom reach.

A sixth rule is to keep the balance between group prayer and personal prayer. Man is not primarily an individual. It is as a member of the Body of Christ that he has any standing before God. Therefore it is important for us to come into the presence of God regularly as a community - as a family as a youth group, as a local congregation. And a community is composed of all kinds of people, not all of them exactly like you. They have different tastes, different ways of praying, different habits of prayer. I have to join them even sometimes when I think that their way of worship is not what it should be. Without participating in community worship and making the necessary adjustments necessary for joining them, we cannot get rid of our selfishness and pride, and grow to be a real human being.

But community worship is not enough by itself. We need various levels of community with varying degrees of intensity of relationship. The youth group and the family are more intimate communities than the congregation. New forms can be used in these smaller groups
which will be difficult or unfamiliar for the congregation as a whole. The prayers in this book are mainly meant for family and group worship, but can also be used for personal prayer in the privacy of your own room at home or in the hostel.

In addition to these forms, however, some other forms of prayer should be mastered for personal use. The most effective and useful of these forms is called ejaculatory prayer. These are one - sentence prayers which one can repeat as many times as necessary, no matter, where or when. You can say them in your mind when you are waiting for a bus; when you are anxious about something; when you are facing temptation, when you feel bored and lonely, while you are lying in bed, comfortable and too lazy to get up; while going to bed and when sleep does not come immediately, and so on.

The following are some of the possible forms of ejaculatory prayer:

1. Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, be merciful to me a sinner.
2. O God, Thou art my God. I love Thee. I am Thine for ever.
3. Lord, you are my Master and Lord, I give myself to Thee.
4. Lord, keep me in Thy ways, keep me from all evil.
5. Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy, Lord have mercy upon me.

You can make up your own forms of prayer, for here the Church lays down no rules for personal prayers. Of these forms above, the first was a favourite with the monks, and is known as the 'Jesus Prayer." They used to recite it thousands of times in a day as a sort of Mantra. In Mount Athos, the monks trained themselves to say this prayer along with every breath. They would say "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God" with every inhaling breath, hold the breath in the lungs for a few seconds and then exhale, saying "be merciful to me a sinner." The idea was that the prayer should become as incessant an action as breathing, that the Lord Jesus Christ should become established in your heart as a deity is in a temple, and that you should constantly be in an attitude of prayer and repentance.

These forms of personal prayer as well as others should be developed. Each child of God has a right to speak to God any time and at
all times, using his or her own words. There are no Church rules for personal prayer. It is an act of your personal freedom, and therefore is all the more pleasing to God when you use your own personal intimate language. Personal prayer enriches group prayer; common prayer in the family, group or congregation enriches one's personal prayer; neither should be neglected. The two should balance each other. But the use of extemporary prayer is not to be encouraged in group worship.

A seventh rule is that prayer should be nourished by the reading of the scriptures and meditation. One can discipline one self to read a chapter of scripture every day.

Read aloud or silently. Meditate on the meaning of the passage. Devotional books may be helpful, but may also obscure the meaning of the scripture. Do not worry about whether the reading of scriptures gives you a feeling of devotion or not. Feelings are deceptive. What you need to find out is the answer to the following questions: "What was God saying to the people of that time through this passage? What does God say to me now?"

Systematic reading of the scriptures and memorizing some passages which touch you deeply will be found very helpful as life advances. You will be grateful to God in your middle age that you started reading and memorizing when your mind was still impressionable.

## Conclusion

All these rules are to help you to become a praying Christian. Only your own sustained and disciplined practice will make you perfect. But remember one thing. Prayer can never be isolated from the common worship of the Eucharist and from the continuous, active compassionate love for your fellowmen. Let us all pray: "Lord, Teach us to pray. Amen."

## 3

## Why pray for the dead? Why ask the departed saints to pray for us?

(The imaginary dialogue between the three intelligent people in our Church continues. This time there are two young ladies also introduced - Mary and Martha)

Paul: The Bible says quite clearly: "There is only one mediator between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus" (I Timothy 2:5). Why do we then ask the Saints to mediate for us? I don't understand.

Thomas: It is true that many people pray more to St. Mary or St. Gregorios than to Christ. What do you think, John? Can you answer Paul's question?

John: I am not sure that I can. I would like to ask Paul a question. Does he ever ask anybody at all to pray for him?

Mary: I do ask people to pray for me when I am in trouble, or when someone dear to me is sick, or when I need something very badly from God.

Martha: How come? Why can't you pray for yourself?
Mary: I guess I am a very sinful person, and I am not sure that God will always hear my prayer. So I ask somebody who is more religious or pious, like some friends I have, or our Achen to pray for us.

Thomas: Does that mean that you don't pray for yourself, or do you ask somebody in addition to your praying for yourself?

Mary: Of course, I do pray for myself, but my prayers are rather weak. So I need the help of someone who will pray for me.

Paul: I see no problem in somebody living praying for me. But how can I be sure that St. Mary or St. Gregorios will hear my request?

John: Oh, so it is only a question whether the Saints are able to hear our requests. If they can hear our requests you see no objection to our asking them in interceding for us?

Paul: I still think that Jesus Christ is the only true mediator between us and God, and that it is taking away from Christ's role as Sole Mediator to ask the departed Saints to pray for us.

Thomas: Paul, I see an inconsistency in your thought. You say it is all right to ask a living Christian to pray for us; but not a departed believer. Well, by asking a living Christian to intercede for you, are you not making that Christian friend another Mediator, taking away from the sole Mediatorship of Christ?

Paul: Yes, but I can see living people praying for each other. In fact the Bible says "Pray for one another" (James 5:16). So that I can see. But why pray to those who are already dead.

Thomas: Paul, would you make clear what your objection is. I don't understand. You say that if you ask a living person to pray for you, you are not violating the sole mediatorship of Christ. Do you think only when you ask a departed saint to pray for you, you violate that sole mediatorship principle?

Paul: I am not sure. I see your point. Somehow I have a prejudice against praying to the Saints. It seems to be almost like idolatry. But where does the Bible say that we should pray to the departed saints?

Mary: There I cannot agree with you Paul. Do you think we should do only those things which the Bible tells us to do? Where does the Bible say that we should turn to the East for prayer, or that we should make the sign of the Cross, or that we should run hospitals and schools, or even that we should build churches? The Bible is not a law-book which tells us all the things which we should do as Christians.

Martha: Well, then, how do we know what we should do or should not do as Christians?

John: Christians have freedom - within the Tradition. That is to say, Christians do not live by law, but the Tradition of the Church serves as a basic guideline, within which they have freedom to decide what is good in each situation. In the cases of both intercession through the Saints and prayer for the departed, the Tradition of the Church, of which the Bible is the earliest witness, offers a reliable orientation. But the Bible does not witness to the whole of the Christian Tradition. It shows us the earliest strata of the Tradition of the Church. The Tradition is always growing and we should know it in its dynamic continuity.

Martha: That is a lot of heavy theology which I don't fully understand, John. But tell me, did the early Church practice either of the two - prayer for the departed or asking for the intercession of the Saints? What is the evidence?

John: One of the earliest documents we have is the Martyrdom of Polycarp. St. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna (Asia Minor), was a great leader of the post-Apostolic Church. Baptized as an infant, he died as a martyr at the age of 86 , being burnt to death around 155 A . D. The story of his martyrdom was written immediately afterwards and is a classic of the Christian Tradition. In this document, the people of Smyrna, who are the authors, say
"The Centurion. .... put him (St. Polycarp) in the midst, and as their custom, is burned him. So we afterwards took-up his bones, more valuable than precious stones, and finer than fine gold, and laid them where it was fitting. There the Lord will permit us, as shall be possible to us, to assemble ourselves together in joy and gladness, and to celebrate the birthday of his martyrdom". (para XVIII).

Thomas: So, that shows only that the relics of martyrs were treasured by the Church, and that the anniversaries of their martyrdom were celebrated by the Church with joy and gladness. But does it say anything about praying for the dead or asking for the intercession of departed Saints?

John: Yes, you are right. All that we know from this passage is that

[^0]the Church from the beginning;

* that their day of martyrdom was celebrated by the Church with great joy and gladness; and
* that the martyrs were regarded as having been "born" on the day of their martyrdom into a life of joy and gladness with the Lord.

Thomas: Is there any other evidence from the early centuries?
John: Of course there is plenty of other evidence. Let us begin with the New Testament. The Epistle to the Hebrews speaks about the cloud of witnesses by whom we are always surround (12:1). There are the holy people of the Old and New Testament, who always share with us life in the Body of Christ. Praying for each other is an essential aspect of life in the Body of Christ; they pray for us and we should pray for them.

Martha: Tell us more arguments from the Bible.
John: Well, look at the same Hebrews passage: "The writer says to the Hebrews Christians, that they are no longer standing before Mount Sinai, with its blazing fire and tempest and thunder and lightning that accompanied the receiving of the law; but
"You have come to Mount Zion and to the City of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering and to the assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to a ruler who is God of all, and to the spirits just men made perfect, and to Jesus" (12:22-24).

This is where the Church lives and worships - in the company of the first-born whose names are inscribed in heaven and the "spirits of righteous human beings made perfect". Our Orthodox Church never thinks of itself without becoming aware of the "cloud of witnesses" who surround us all the time in the Body of Christ.

Thomas: I begin to see the point that Jesus, the Sole Mediator, is never without his body, the Church in heaven and on earth. I now understand better what Hebrews also says: i.e. "The one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all one" (Or, "one one" -

Heb. 2:11). So neither we nor the departed saints can intercede for each other except as part of Christ's own intercession, for he is always, perpetually, praying for us (Heb. 7:25), and as part of the Holy Spirit's perpetual intercession (Rom 8:27).

Mary: I also can see that (a) both the living and the departed are in Christ, as members of His body (b) that we should all pray for each other, i.e. we the living should pray for both the living and the departed, and that they the departed, should also pray for the living and the departed.

Paul: What I don't understand is (a) whether the departed saints can actually hear our prayers and (b) what good our prayers can do for a person after he or she has died.

John: The second question was specifically raised in the Church in the 4th century and St. Cyril of Jerusalem gives a clear reply, in his catechetical lectures on the Holy Eucharist (Lecture xxiii: 9-10). I have the text here:
"Then we commemorate all these who have fallen asleep before us, first Patriarchs (of the Old Testament), prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, that by their prayers and intercessions God would receive our petition. Then on behalf of the Holy Fathers and Bishops who fallen asleep before us, and in a word, of all who in past years have fallen asleep among us, believing that it will be a very great benefit to the souls for whom the supplication is put up, while that holy and most awesome sacrifice is set forth.
"And I wish to persuade you by an illustration. For I know that many say, what is a soul profited, which departs from this world either with sins, or without sins, if it be commemorated in the prayer? For if a king were to banish certain persons who had offended against him, and then their people should weave a crown and offer it to him as behalf of those punishment, would he not grant a remission of their penalties? In the same way, we when we offer to Him our supplications for those who have fallen asleep, though they be sinners, weave no crown, but offer up Christ himself as the Sacrifice for our sins, propitiating our merciful God for them as well as for ourselves".

Martha: That is a peculiar illustration. Who was this St. Cyril? When did he live?

John: He was Bishop of Jerusalem from about 340 to 386; a strong fighter against the Arian heresy in the period after the Council of Nicea (325 A.D.). These 24 catechetical lectures were given in or around Lent, 347 AD in the great Cathedral of Jerusalem, and form the most complete corpus we have of the teaching of the Church in the 4th century.

Mary: That is interesting. Then it was not just the medieval Roman Catholic Church that began the cult of the Saints and prayer for the departed. Do any other Eastern Fathers testify to such a practice at that time?

John: The interesting thing is that this is not St. Cyril's personal view that we have in the catechetical lectures. He is commenting on the prayers used in the Qurbana in Jerusalem at that time. And all scholars know that the Jerusalem Qurbana retained the original form established by the Apostles themselves. Everywhere in the churches of that time in the Holy Qurbana the saints were commemorated and asked to intercede for us, and we remembered also the departed faithful.

Paul: All right I am beginning to see. But tell us, who else among the Fathers write about this?

John: I cannot give you an exhaustive list. But I have some notes here, from which I shall read:

1. St. John Chrysostem (ca. 347-407): "Not in vain was this tule ordained by the Apostles, that in the awesome Mysteries (i.e. Holy Qurbana) remembrance should be made of the departed for they knew that is a great gain to them and a great benefit". (Commentary on I Corinthians Hom. 41, p. 457 a)
2. St. Basil (ca. 330-379) enumerates the many favours (largely temporal blessings) granted by St. Mamas to those who pray to him (Sermon on St. Mamas para 26)
3. St. Gregory Nazianzen (329-389) - prays for his younger brother

Caesarius who died in 369 A.D.:"O Lord of life and death ...... do thou now receive Caesarius, the first fruits of our pilgrimage". (N.P.N.F. series Two Vol: VII:p. 238). St. Gregory also prays to St. Athanasius, who died in 37 AD in the following words:


#### Abstract

"And mayest thou cat upon us from above a propitious glance, and conduct this people in its perfect worship of the perfect Trinity, which as Father, Son, Holy Ghost, we contemplate and adore. And mayest thou, if my lot be peaceful, possess and aid me in my pastoral charge, or if it pass through struggles, uphold me, or take me to thee, and set me with thyself and those like thee, in Christ Himself, our Lord, to whom be all glory, honour and power for evermore". (NPNF Vol: VII: p. 280).


4. St. Gregory of Nyssa (ca. 330-ca. 395) makes the following supplication to the Martyr St. Theodore, on his feast day.
"O thou, come here to us, where you once were, on this thy feast day, we invoke thee; even thou dost dwell in the ethereal regions above, even if thine abode is about the heavens, circulating with the choirs of angels serving Thy Lord, worshipping as a faithful Servant with the principalities and powers, come for a little while to us who honour thee, O friend Invisible, .... intercede for your country to our common king; for the country of the martyr is the place of his suffering, of which the citizens and relations are those who know him, have him and honour him. We honour your afflictions, we show forth your sufferings: ..... (He then goes on to invoke the protection of the Martyr for his homeland which is being invaded by the scythians)".

Such instances can be indefinitely multiplied from both East and West. We know that every year there was an annual Qurbana in the cemetery when all the departed were commemorated. We know that the place of burial of Saints and martyrs became places of pilgrimage.

Paul: I can see now that in the early centuries Christians prayed to the Saints and prayed for the faithful departed. The only question is, does not the Bible say somewhere that the dead cannot pray?

Martha: I know the passages which all my Protestant friends quote:
"Dost thou work wonder for the dead?
Do the shades rise up to praise Thee"? (Ps. 88:10)
"The dead do not praise the Lord,
Nor do any that go down into silence". (Ps. 115:17)
Mary: But Psalm 115:17 is followed by 115:18 which says
"But we will bless the Lord From this time forth for evermore".
Evermore, does not mean up to the moment of death, does it?
John: Again we have some theological problems here. If it does not sound too heavy for you, I will say that we don't create our theology from stray verses of the Old Testament. Or even from stray sayings of our Lord, who said "Let the dead past bury their own dead" (Mt. 8:22); this we do not understand in the sense that there should be no funerals at all. There were periods in Old Testament history that the soul survived in Sheol as a pale shadow of your self. That was not the teaching of our Lord. He taught us that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were alive, since the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was God of the living and not of the dead (Mt. 22:32).

Thomas: What is the context in which the Psalmist has said these things in Ps. 88:10 and Ps. 115:17?

Mary: That is clear. In Ps. 88, it is Human crying out to God from a long-standing illness, asking for immediate relief. He says in effect, "what is the use of your healing me after I am dead? Heal me now, so that I can praise thee, which I am still alive". One cannot make a doctrine out of that.

Martha: What about Ps. 115:17?
Mary: The same thing. It is a dialogue hymn, in which two groups of people are saying to each other to "bless God" and "may God bless". And the choirs are saying that those who do not praise Yahweh are already dead, and that those who are really alive will eternally praise him. That poetic statement is not a basis for Christian doctrine about the Saints and the departed.

Paul: I think I have learned a few things today. I will tell you what I have understood.

* First, the Saints, and all the faithful departed are all part of the body of Christ, and in the body of Christ, we are duty bound to pray for each other;
* Second, praying to the Saints to intercede for us is not in principle different from asking living people to pray for us. Both do not detract from the sole mediatorship of Christ.
* Third, the Church practiced both prayers for the departed and invocation of the Saints from the beginning, and it is only the Protestants who stopped it, due to some misunderstanding.

Thomas: I am also beginning to see that the Tradition of our Church is always reliable. But we modern young people need a lot of help to understand the meaning of many of our practices.

Mary: There are many other things I want to know about our faith. We should meet again soon.

## PART 2

Malayalam Articles

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## PART 3

## Prayers

## Litany for Peace

## Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios

Lord and Creator of humanity, have mercy on this race of ours! In your image it was created, to live in peace and joy, reflecting your glory. Look at us now!

Swords and spears we have learned to make, to maim and kill, to oppress and to exploit. Now guns and rockets, bombs and tanks!! We lust and covet, we fight and destroy, for it's desires have overpowered us. Our greed has become insatiable.

- Have mercy on us, Lord!

We have the borders of our own lands and seek fellowship with others only as our desires and our greed drive us. We go out only to plunder and rob, to steal and exploit, through our trade policies and our commercial strategies. We are still as greedy as ever, still as violent, still as oppressive.

- Have mercy on us, Lord!

By our greed and lust, by our pride and selfishness, we have made this world, a place of strife and struggle of war and terrorism. We spend a major portion of the fruit of our labors to fight our brothers and sisters in other lands or in our own. Have compassion for our miserable plight!

- Have mercy on us, Lord!

Teach us to seek justice and to pursue peace, not seeking our own, but serving the interests of the poor and needy, the oppressed and the exploited. Teach us to labor in love without greed, in order to serve in dignity and serve the needs of our fellow human beings. Teach us not to covet, not to exploit, not to oppress.

- Teach us the ways of peace, Lord!

Help us who are gathered here to see our own role in a greedbased, oppressive and exploitative economy. Rescue us from this oppressive set-up, in which we are more often on the side of the oppressor than the oppressed. Rescue us from our narrow loyalties, from our addiction to privilege and comfort, pleasure seeking, from
our local, racial or national parochialism. Teach us to look upon all humanity as one family to whose common interests we are all committed.

- Teach us the ways of peace, Lord!

Kindle in us the quest for peace with justice, Lord! We know not where to seek it, though we know that it is only as we commit ourselves and apply ourselves to the pursuit of peace with justice, that we can know the way forward. Deliver us from the shackles of indifference and self-interests, from laziness and love of comfort and pleasure, from vain speaking and from the desire for empty praise and unearned glory from the distracting pursuit of thousand follies, from a false perception of what is the true good, from every lie and terror, from word without verity, from all that alienates from you, our Creator!

- Teach us the ways of peace, Lord!

We are constantly destroying our ecology and we are affected with all kind of new diseases! Teach us to join pace with the rhythm of the eco-system of the earth and the universe which are your creation!

- Teach us the ways of peace, Lord!

Teach us the process of human becoming, through interaction with nature and through interrelation with other human beings in social labor, with a critical assessment of human social activity in science and technology and in political economy!

- Teach us the ways of peace, Lord!

Help us with courage, Lord! We need courage to stop stockpiling and start disarming. We need courage not to waste and not to consume more than what is good for all of us together. We need courage to trust our fellow human beings. We need courage to start shaping a new world economy based on peace with justice.

- Grant us courage, Lord!

We need wisdom to know how to order our lives as a world community. We need wisdom to know what are the values worth living for, so that we do not lose our souls in the mad pursuit of a foolish affluence. We need wisdom to know how to achieve the training of
the masses of men and women for seeking their own liberation and for building the right kinds of societies.

- Grant us wisdom, Lord!

We need power, power to withstand the unjust oppressors, terrorists, power to resist the blandishments and seductions of power itself. We need power to imagine and to create. We need power to see visions and to pursue the truth. We need power to build a world of peace with justice. We need power to hope, to struggle and to strive. We need power to create what is good and joyous, peaceful and just.
— Grant us the right kind of power, Lord!
And most difficult of all, we need power to love! We need to know your love, so that in that love alone we seek our security. We need to know your love, in order that we may not to be afraid to love. Â We need to love, for love is the sign of your presence, and without love neither peace nor justice is worth very much.

- Teach us both to know your love, and to be unafraid to love, Lord!


## Prayer for Peace

Dear Lord and Creator of Mankind, forgive our foolish ways.
Drop your still dews of quietness
till all our striving ceases.
Take from our souls the stress and strain and let us confess the beauty of your peace!
Breathe through the heats of our desire your coolness and your balm!
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire
Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still small voice of calm!
Restore the peace of world In the mercy let justice triumph!
Swords into ploughshares
Missiles into fertilizer
May wars terrorism cease
And the days of peace begin!
Blessed be the Lord our God

He has promised, he will fulfill
Strife shall cease, Peace will come
Justice shall reign, joy will overflow.
This terrorism, wars and battles between ourselves first start precisely in the desires fighting inside our own selves. We want something we haven't got it, so we are prepared to kill. We have an ambition that we cannot satisfy, so we fight to get our way by force. Why do we not have what we want?
Because we don't pray for it; when we pray and don't get it is because we have not prayed properly, we have prayed for something in order to indulge our own desires!
Into your hands, O! Lord of all, we commend ourselves, take us, break us if need be, then make us anew that in you we may be healed restored and united! Reach us your spirit that may guide our thoughts and direct our wills! Grant us wisdom to know what is right and power to do what is good!
Come, Holy Spirit, come
Come as the fire and burn
Come as the wind, and cleanse
Come as the rain, and soothe
Come as the light and reveal
Convict, convert, comfort
Consecrate us to do your will.
O! Thou that are manifest, be Thou manifest to us:
From the unreal lead us to Real,
From darkness lead us to Light, From death lead us to Immortality!
And now committing ourselves along with the whole of humanity into your loving hands, we would sum up our aspirations in the prayer saying:
Thy Will Be Done!

## PART 4

## Life and Vision

## 1

# The Theological Bases of Mar Gregorios Humanism and Socialism <br> <br> P. Govindappilla 

 <br> <br> P. Govindappilla}

Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios, the eminent Orthodox Theologian hailing from Kerela earned world-wide reputation by his versatile scholarship, deep piety and innovative ideas on society and theology. He was holding the prestigious office of the Metropolitan of Delhi, when he passed away at the age of 74 in 1996. He was at home with many languages of the East and West including his mother tongue Malayalam, Sanskrit, Hindi, Amharic, Syriac, English, Latin, French and German. He was well-versed in the philosophies of both the East and West. Beginning his career as a minor official in the Post and Telegraph department, where he was also engaged in Trade Union activities, he moved on to be a teacher, an educationist and a priest. Before taking up higher responsibilities in the hierarchy he spent a few years as the head of the educational establishment in Ethiopia after which he went to Yale, Princeton and Oxford to do research in theology and won a Doctorate with distinction.

Coming back to India, he took up teaching in the Orthodox Theological Seminary in Kottayam and many other responsibilities associated with his chosen vocation. He was associated with and held high positions in the World Council of Churches and various international and national bodies like the Student Christian Movement. He was a very sought-after lecturer and visiting professor in many universities both in India and abroad. He visited many countries in all the continents as an honored guest and esteemed speaker and scholar.

Though Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios was a devout Christian priest and theologian, he was a welcome guest, speaker and counselor not only in other religious groups and gatherings, abut also in various secular forums and organizations. He was a persuasive speaker with an admirable knack of presenting even the most abstruse concepts in simple and clear diction a faculty so very evident in his various books and
essays as well. Though Dr. Gregorios was primarily a Christian theologian, his theology was not a narrow discipline confined to the scriptures and tradition. Of course, as a Christian, he bestowed on the Bible texts a position of primacy in authority and wisdom. He certainly considered them as divine revelations. But Mar Gregorios steered clear of the other traditions and texts. So when he drives home his points of view we find him quoting profusely from Upanishads and the Gita of Hindus, Tao traditions of the Chinese, Zen revelations of the Japanese, Buddhist and Jain texts in Pali, and the Koran of Islam. This multiplicity of his sources does not mean that he was a sort of eclectic with no firm grounding of his own. He relentlessly developed his original concepts and theories, with a wealth of evidence and materials from not only religious texts but also from secular history and philosophy and politics ( See his The Human Presence, An Orthodox View of Nature, Madras, 1980). Mar Gregorios' Science for Sane Societies ( New York, 1987) bears witness to his thorough acquaintance with the latest developments in natural sciences and technology, and also his insight into the intricacies of the history and philosophy of science.

Mar Gregorios was far from being an enemy of reason and science. He also respected secular enterprise and knowledge. He even concedes the superiority of secular knowledge in many fields. He says:
"This writer has no illusions about the comparative merits of present day religious thought and secular thought. The defiantly superior quality of secular thought, both liberal Western and Marxist Western, may lead some people to abandon their religious loyalties."

Paulos Mar Gregorios doesn't approve of such abandonment because o his own deep conviction that "the redemption renewal of science/ technology, political economy and philosophical reflection need not and, may say it, cannot take place without the participation of religious commu-nities" ( Ibid). A Marxist like the present writer may not entirely agree with the terminology used and emphasis made by Mar Gregorios but there are some underlined considerations in his assertions with which a Marxist may find himself on the same wavelength. A positivist and value-free science or system of knowledge is
anathema to Marxists as it is to Mar Gregorios. All knowledge and even reason are to be informed and inter-related with ethics and human or societal concern.This concern is common to both Marxist and Mar Gregorios and this concern is discernable to anyone who can penetrate the façade of his theological terminology. The facet becomes thinner in the concluding paragraph of Sane Societies:
"I would also plead that secular thinkers show some patience with us. We promise to learn, but give as a chance by exposing your ways of seeing and thinking to us in such a global concourse. Let us together be committed to the care for created order, so imperiled by the presence of evil in science-technology, in political economy and in value-reflection. Let us commit ourselves to banish militarism and the arms race, the nuclear stock piles and our huge national armies. Let us commit ourselves not to use science-technology or political economy for oppression, domination and exploitation. Let us commit ourselves on behalf of humanity to turn the course of its development from evil to good, from destruction to construction, from ugliness to beauty, from falsehood to truth and from bondage to freedom, from gloom to hope, from boredom to joy. Let us do it together."

The present writer, a Marxist and a materialist, endorses in toto this stirring call of this great Indian theologian. And I'm sure, I'm in the company of tens of thousands of secular and socialist activists.

Another important factor in the theological and philosophical thought Paulos Mar Gregorios is its distinct eastern flavor. Though India has more than half a century ago broken the political shackles of Western colonial dominance, the cultural and philosophical dominance of the West still weighs heavily on our national psyche and discourse. Our writers and media no qualms in peddling second hand wares, churned out in the antiquated mills of European thought. European thought and science which played a positive role in the world in early Renaissance years did not take long to become a cancerous Eurocentric growth in the world polity, and insidious instrument of imperialism and influential tool for distortion of truth and knowledge. Even theology is not free from this contagion. Though a umber of enlightened thinkers and writers in the West itself are tuning away from this canker, it is a pity that, except for a few distinguished minds,
the general run of our writers and rulers still labor under the thralldom of Eurocentrism.

It is a matter of great significance that, in spite of his deep involvement with and marvelous grasp of European taught and science, Dr Paulos Mar Gregorios was among the very few distinguished modern philosophers in India, who were not tainted by Euro centrism. His theology is distinctively Eastern, as was Jesus Christ himself. Even in science and its application, in medicine and other branches of practice Mar Gregorios resisted the snares of Euro-centrism. He says:
"My detailed interest in Western systems of healing is at least 30 years old. I'm convinced that the present hegemony of Western medicine is not in the best interest of humanity. It seems incapable of meeting the needs of six thousand million people" (Healing: A Holistic Approach, Kottayam, 1995).

Mar Gregorios sharply criticises the short-sighted Euro centric policies of free India's governments to the detriment of indigenous and time-tested systems. But he does not condemn outright the entire Western system. He says:
"A disproportionately large amount of public funds is now devoted to Western medical education and Western-style medical institutions. While the Western system has much to its credit, recent developments have made it unaffordable for most people, unacceptable in tem s of the damage it does, and undesirable in terms of it over mechanization, and over technologisation of both diagnosis and therapy." (Ibid).

This holistic approach that Mar Gregorios recommends to the art and science of healing is also applicable to the whole wide- ranging corpus of his thought, life and action. His humanism, socialism and science are not apart from his theology and priesthood-all are closely interwoven into a beautiful single fabric of great and full-blown personality, full of compassion and concern of humans, which cut across the boundaries of humans and non-human beings and spread out to all animate and inanimate beings; an attitude and philosophy which could be innate, perhaps, only in an Indian Christian from India, though there may be exceptional cases like that of Saint Francis of Assisi.

Now we will examine how these peculiar features of Mar Gregorios world outlook reflected in, or according to his detractors refracted his theology. As we stated earlier, the most distinctive feature of his theology was its Eastern flavour with deeply ingrained humanism. His humanism was not very dissimilar to the ancient Greek concept. But there too his roots lay deep in the Eastern tradition including the peculiarly strong traditions of St Thomas Christians of Kerela, of whom Mar Gregorios was a distinguished representative. Christianity came to Kerela long before Emperor Constantine adopted it as the state religion of the Roman Empire by his edict just before his death in 337 AD. Tradition has it that St Thomas, a disciple of Jesus Christ himself, visited Kerela and converted a few Malayalies in the first century after Christ. Modern historians may not accept this tradition in toto. Whatever that be, there is an unanimity in asserting that large sections of Malayalis adopted Christianity long before Constantine's conversion. Joseph Pulikunnel, an authority on the history and culture of Kerela's Christian community says;
"Nazranis in India, otherwise known as St Thomas Christians, have a unique history among the Christian Churches all over the world. This Church was founded by Thomas the Apostle in the early second half of the first century. This is the only Church planted by Apostle outside the confines of the Roman Empire. Another historical feature of this Church is that this Church was neither persecuted by the kings nor patronized by them. The church grew within the cultural milieu of India adopting its social and cultural moorings and at the same time accepting and worshipping Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.
"India is a land of plurality in religion. Indian kings never interfered in the internal affairs of their subjects. Kerela had vast trade connection with the ancient maritime nations like Phoenicia and Rome. The contemporary travelers have recorded the existence of a flourishing Christian community in Kerela. Kerela had given asylum to other Christians during religious persecution. It is believed that there were even Jewish colonies in India before Christ." (Identity of Nazrani Church of Kerela by Joseph Pulikunnel, Edamattom, Kerela, 1997).

Unlike the European church which grew up along with a strict feudal hiearchal order which was reflected in Church organizations,

St Thomas Christians were a free and equal community. They were guided by their own indigenous laws which they call "St Thomas Laws, or in Malalayam "Thommayude Margam". Mar Joseph Powathil, the Catholic Archbishop of Changanasserry says:
"The sum total of their particular theological heritage was expressed by the phrase " Law of Thomas which implied there Christian heritage, specifically expressed in the lifestyle of their church Thommayude Margam was a dynamic expression of a living theology. The theology e have now is merely a borrowed Western theology, not drawn from our liturgical and spiritual patrimony. A going back to the real sources is maligned as sectarian " and avoided...They had an ecclesiology of their own in which the theology of the local church was a living reality. The parish assembly gathered under the leadership of the local clergy was an ecclesiological reality as the best expression of the church, the people of God. It was not an administrative body. The Dravidian village assembly called 'manram' seems to have influenced the formation of the local assembly called Palliyogam. It is the expression of the Communion of a sharing community' (Ibid).

It has to be borne in mind that Christianity of the Catholic variety entered Kerela after 1498, when the Portuguese navigator Vasco Da Gama reached Calicut via the Cape of Good Hope and began the Western conquest of India. As a part of their colonizing project, the Portuguese tried to control and reshape Kerela's ancient church into European mounds. The high watermark of this enterprise was " The Synod of Diamper" in 1599.

Through Acts and Decrees of this Synod, the Portuguese sought to distort the traditions of St Thomas Christians and erase all that was indigenous, and libertarian and fraternal in the Kerela church. The history Churches after 1599 was a continuous struggle to shake off the shackles sought to be imposed by this Synod and its victory and failures. The result was the division and fragmentation of the once unified St Thomas community in Kerela. The Catholic sector is still closer to the European tradition. Mar Powathil is the Arch Bishop of Syro-Malabar Catholic Church. If even the Catholic Church in Kerela is so devoted to keeping its indigenous traditions, we can imagine the loyalties and convictions of the churches with lesser European im-
pact. Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios of the oldest of these traditions in which passion for equality and brotherhood coupled with pride in indigenous origins.

The second source of his inspiration is what has come to be known as the Cappadocia Church which flourished in West Asia in the fourth century A.D. Though it was an eastern province of the Roman Empire it retained considerable political and religious autonomy. Three great names are associated with the Cappadocian tradition. St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen and St. Gregory of Nyssa. St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nyssa were brothers. St. Basil and St. Gregory Nazianzen were close friends and collaborators. St. Basil, the eldest of all the three was the most versatile and inimitable in organizational talent and learning. Gregory Nazianzen was an outstanding Greek scholar and a silver-tongued orator. The youngest of them all, Gregory of Nyssa (335-394 A.D.) was among them the most philosophical in temperament and achievements. His prolific writings bear witness to his wide-ranging interests and encyclopedic knowledge. He was very liberal and tolerant in his attitude to other faiths and traditions. All these seem very similar to the interests and accomplishments of our own Mar Gregorious. Some of the philosophical and scientific writings of Gregory seem to be surprisingly modern after more than 17 centuries. His insights into the working of the mind and body along with the evolutionary process of human kind were very much in advance of the knowledge of the fourth century A.D. Though it was an eastern province of the Roman Empire, it retained considerable political and religious autonomy. Three great names are associated with the Cappadocian tradition. St Basil, St. Gregory Naziazen, and St Gregory of Nyssa. St. Basil and St Gregory of Nyssa were brothers. St Basil and St Gregory Nazianzen were close friends and collaborators. St Basil, the eldest of all the three was the most versatile and inimitable in organizational talent and learning. Gregory Nanzianzen was an outstanding Greek scholar and a silver tongued orator. The youngest of them all, Gregory of Nyassa (335-394 A.D) was among the most philosophical in temperament and achievements. His prolific writings bear witness to his wide-ranging interests and encyclopedic knowledge. He knew many languages and was up-to-date in knowl-
edge of Science, Philosophy and Theology. He was very liberal and tolerant in his attitudes to other faiths and traditions. All these seem very similar to the interests and accomplishments of our own Mar Gregorios. Some of the philosophical and scientific writings of Gregory seem to be surprisingly modern after more than 17 centuries. His insights into the working of the mind and body along with the evolutionary process of human kind were very much in advance of the knowledge of the fourth century A.D.

Gregory's writings on the relation between man's hands and brain anticipate some of the seminal ideas expressed by Frederick Engels'findings on the relation between hand and head in the evolution of ape to man. Let us quote from the book on "The writings of the Early Church Fathers by Thomas P. Taaffe (New York 1996).
"Human Hands: Gregory does not think that it is necessary for him to catalogue all the ways in which man's hands are of service to him. He does offer some interesting reflections on the special place of human hands in the service of reason. The hands are of particular service to reason, for they translate the symbols of rational speech into written symbols. There is another way in which they serve reason. Without hands, Gregory claims, man's dace would have been considerably altered. It would have been elongated so that the nose could serve in the search for food. The lips and tongue would have similarly different. In other words, without hands, a man would have to gather his food primarily through the shape and character and nose, lips, teeth and tongue. Such an altered shape would have made the mouth a poor instrument of articulate speech. Thus, says Gregory, our hands have given our mouth the leisure which it needed to serve the reason in speech."

However original and innovative the writer may be, he does not spring up from a vacuum. Every great and epoch-making writer has a bedrock of traditions from which he rises and to new heights and uncharted skies. Therefore, while we explore and identify the sources of Mar Gregorios inspiration and origin, we do not classify him as a paraphraser of some existing or ancient traditions. Drawing deep on some eternal foundations of human wisdom and values, Dr Paulos Mar Gregorios, like other epoch making innovators in thought and
action, takes up challenges of his contemporary world and builds up perspectives to overcome the hurdles and march ahead. From the foregoing it should be clear that his concern for the divine is an aspect of his concern for life on earth. The kingdom of God preached by Christ was not a hypothetical prospect beyond death. When he said that the Kingdom on earth was imminent and even around the corner he did not mean that it was an ethereal prospect beyond the reach of mundane reality. Mar Gregorios speaks of humane, world and God:
"Man is a mediator. He is poised between the two realities-God and the world. He shares in both, he is united to both. He cannot live apart from either. That is the meaning of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. The only humanity that can survive is the new humanity, the humanity that has now been inseparably, indivisibly united with God in Jesus Christ. And because of its locus in the one divine human nature of Christ, the new humanity is a mediating humanity-a humanity that reconciles and united God and the world. It is an incarnate hu-manity-a humanity that is an inseparable part of the whole creation and inseparably united to the creator.
"This, then, is the meaning of the human presence in the cosmos. To be with the one who unites. To be in Christ, uniting the divine, and the human, and the creator and the creation, the transcendent and the eminent, the spiritual and the scientific-technological. To enter the mystery of " Christ in us, Yes, in us Christians but also in us human beings, in us, as an integral part of the whole creation" (The Human Presence-An orthodox view of nature by Paulos Mar Gregorios, Chennai 1980).

If anyone decides that he can read only one book by Mar Gregorios which may give him a sum total of his views on himself, God and society, we may recommend him no other book better than The Human Presence, which is almost a manifesto of Mar Gregorious, clear in exposition, comprehensive in scope, and brief in span. This along with Science for Sane Societies, from which we have quoted constitute a new world outlook of the late 20th century for the creation of a freer, nobler and happier society. The path which he has evolved to march towards that ideal is paved with thorns and pits, but it is a sure path which would prove valid even beyond this century now drawing
to a close.
The following is the quintessence of Dr Paulos Mar Gregorios vision and mission:
"We know that our civilization needs reconstitution, but civilization are not made out of whole clothes by planners and engineers. We have to make gigantic effort to move from where we are towards where we ought to be going. But it has become difficult to be sure in which direction to move, because the vision is not clear, the fog is dense, and something has gone wrong with our eyesight as well.
"What follows is little more than an attempt to rub the eyes; it wont restore the eyesight or dispel the fog. Spiritual eyesight can be restored only with the return of moral health, and clearing the fog, requires spiritual penetration. But it is important that people begin talking about how the eyesight has been lost and what caused the fog.
"The book is a plea-a plea for a community effort. The future does not promise charismatic individual leaders who will take us to our destination. It is more reasonable for more charismatic communities that pioneer and piolet in the interest of humanity as a whole. The church of Jesus Christ is a community set within the human community. We need now charismatic communities cutting across the borders of church and world, across the confines of each separate religions or secular ideology" (Ibid).
(Paulos Mar Gregorios Award Souvenir, 1999, Sophia Society, New Delhi)

## 2

## Mar Gregorios As I Know Him

## Job Mar Philoxenos

It was when I was a Deacon of 16, that I first heard about Valiya Tirumeni, then Mr. Paul Varghese. He had come back to Kerala after a stint in Ethiopia as Advisor to the Emperor and then after a period of academic studies in America. This was a time when Paul Varghese was seriously thinking about joining priesthood. This decision had stirred the thoughts of many a young men. A man who held a very reputable and lucrative post was coming to become a priest in Malankara Church! The decision was definitely a sacrifice, one borne out of deep conviction. Valiya Tirumeni could have become anybody had he taken a different
decision. The sacrifice was for definitely for the glory of God as is clear from his contributions to the Church. This was a turning point in his career. The deeply embedded religious faith and conviction he imbibed right from his early childhood helped him in taking the correct decision. Every one of us has this inner call of the Soul, but very rarely we respond to this spiritual experience. That Tirumeni could respond to this call at the right time was the greatness of the wonderful phenomenon called Mar Gregorios.

Mr. Paul Varghese who came from America met the then Catholicos, His Holiness Moran Mar Geevarghese II, who had doubts about Mr. Paul Varghese's loyalty to the Church, who according to His Holiness lived and studied for a long period in a protestant country. A very holy man who always stood for preserving the purity and sanctity of the Orthodox faith and its traditions, His Holiness with an eye of suspicion decided to interview Mr. Paul Varghese. The interview enabled both the interviewer and the interviewed to increase their admiration for each other.

I had occasions to hear about this interview both from His Holiness the Catholicos and Valiya Tirumeni. Two days after this memorable interview at Parumala, His Holiness was found in conversation
with the late Mar Thoma Dionysius at the Bethany Aramana. Tirumeni, in fact was groping for words to express fully the depth of Mr. Paul Varghese's wisdom and understanding about the Church. Years after, our Valiya Tirumeni himself had said about this meeting that His Holiness on that day had asked him a volley of questions, more than 150 questions. These questions Dr. Gregorios said had helped him to see the intuitive wisdom of His Holiness, a quality seen in great sages. The ancient seers had intuitive while the scholars have the derivative wisdom. The reason for Valiya Thirumeni's adventures and explorations into the teachings of Gregory of Nyssa can very well be attributed to this interview.

Mr. Paul Varghese, the devotee ardently delved deep into the intuitive wisdom of the Oriental Fathers and brought out its richness and glory in the form of 'Cosmic Man', 'The Joy of Freedom', etc. This also helped him to find similar strains in the thought-stream of our ancient nation's culture. His book 'Enlightenment, East and West', a comparative study of the two civilizations and his final conclusion that Eastern enlightenment was by far superior in every respect to that of the Western Civilization bear testimony to this fact. Valiya Thirumeni was in praise, when he acknowledged the part played by His Holiness, Geevarghese II in moulding his thoughts. The conversation between them lasted for two hours only, but its impact in Valiya Thirumeni lasted longer. Still longer will be the impact of the teachings of Valiya Thirumeni upon the future generation, who would be benefited from his teachings. A small interview between Christ and Paul made Paul a different man. Its impact made Paul an interpreter of the teachings of Jesus Christ. The study of Pauline Writings is continuing and it will continue to influence the world as long as this Universe exists.

Mr. Paul Varghese was ordained a Deacon and was then a priest by His Holiness. Father Paul Varghese again went back to America to continue his studies further and to hold very important portfolios to the appreciation of all. This period in his life had been a very productive one. For him hard working was a 'Tapasya'. It was this dedication and commitment of an extraordinary nature that made him what he was. Born in a poor family, which could not provide him means for
his studies beyond S.S.L.C., Dr. Gregorios had grown to be one of the greatest personalities of his time. The journey from that humble beginning to the exalted position he held is a saga of rare commitment and devotion to the beliefs and ideas he held sacred. It was nothing but hard working that did the wonder, the alcholy that makes pure the impure, the perfect the imperfect. Mere hard working is not sufficient. Hard working with a deep rooted conviction and an unrelented stand never to deviate from the path chartered already are needed for the crucible that distills out the essence in a human being. Dr. Gregorios was working hard till the time of his death. He never permitted the old age and its accompanied debilities to conquer him. Until his death, he was very active. He took very keen interest in being very clean and hygienic. He was so strong in his conviction that nobody could change his mind. If by force and persuasion he had to change his stand, the later development had vindicated that after all what he had stood for was the correct one.

He was a great man in every respect. His life had been a puzzle to us. It was because of our inability to see its glory in the dazzling incandescent brilliance it had radiated. We had seen in the past Bishops with extraordinary purity and inexorable thirst for truth and excellence, politicians with impeccable conduct and political acumen, philosophers with both mundane and transcendental wisdom and social reformers with great fervor and fire. But seldom we have seen one like Dr. Gregorios, who combined in him simultaneously all that go to make a perfect scientist, a perfect bishop, a perfect social reformer, etc. He had the wisdom of a sage, the vision of a philosopher, the aura of a saint, the eye of a prophet, the astuteness of a politician, the quest of a scientist, the intuition of a mystic, the hope of a visualiser, the dream of a builder, the clarity of a thinker, the lucidity of a writer, the austerity of a monk, the conviction of a believer, the fire of a revolutionary, the zeal of a missionary. People of this stature are gifts of God. We who had to associate with him either closely or distantly are fortunate; for the phenomenon was a rare wonder, a blaze in the firmament. The sheen of its splendour will illumine the humanity, groping in darkness.

When the question of an Assistant Metropolitan for Delhi Diocese
came up for discussion in the Holy Synod and in the Managing Committee Valiya Thirumeni had chosen me for that post, although there had been better and very eminent candidates. I do not know whether I measured myself up to the expectation and confidence he had reposed in me. Knowing my own limitations, I always viewed Thirumeni from a distance with great respect, admiration and adulteration. I never had any disrespect for him. There had been misunderstandings amongst us, not due to my fault. But when I look back, I am perfectly happy that I could settle them by falling on my knees and kissing his holy feet which carried a head and heart that light to the millions and will continue to radiate that light to the core of the hearts of hundreds of millions in the years to come.

May his soul find rest with saints and martyrs in the bosom of Abraham on the right side of the throne of God and enjoy eternally the bliss meant for those who had pleased God Almighty. May his prayers be a fortress for us, his teachings a light for us when we grope in darkness for one step further.
(Vision, 1997 Jan.)

## 3

# Human Freedom: A Gregorian Perspective 

## Dr. Mathews Mar Thimothios

The late Paulos Mar Gregorios was a towering personality with varied interests, in art, literature, philosophy, religion, science, psychology, bio-ethics, politics etc. In a way he was known to be "Cosmic Man" in every sense. Very few subjects were alien to him and he had excelled in almost all fields into which he entered. Mar Gregorios' academic research is based on the writings of another Gregorios, St. Gregory of Nyssa, the fourth century church father. Mar Gregorios showed much interest in the idea of Human Freedom as found in the teachings of St. Gregory. Through his study he made an earnest effort to present the writings of the early fathers to the post-modern society. Paulos Gregorios through his study made an effort to construct a link between the existing polarities of freedom of man and the freedom of God. That's why he confesses that his task is to analyze the problem of human existence between the two polarities of God and creation. This proved to be his rummage for the ultimate truth and the real love for wisdom than a mere intellectual curiosity.

St. Gregory of Nyssa's world of thought is based on the idea that the human (Man) is created in the image of God. Therefore if man is a slave, the same will be true of the Creator too. Otherwise one cannot understand the idea of the 'image of God'. For him, if we say the humanity is created in the image of God, that means either the human will be deathless or sinless. On the other, the God himself will prove to be sinful and prone to death. These two ideas are incomprehensible for us. But eastern theologians explain these dichotomies in a systematic way.

According to Stoics, the whole cosmos itself is God and Man is both a part and a miniature from of the macro cosmos. Like the soul in the body, God also prevails in the universe. In Aristotile's view, God is considered as first cause and uncaused cause. That means God is fully transcended from the universe. But when we start analyzing the origin of Cosmos, the nature, God's existence in relation with the
universe etc. These became difficult issues to probe.
St. Gregory suggests a convincing justification to explain the creation process. According to him, creation is the projection of the will, wisdom and power of God. God's being is not immanent in creation. He adds that God's being is totally transcendent but his energia, his will, and his power, is the basis of the existence of creation. Therefore all that exists, so long as it exists, participates in the will, power, and the wisdom of God.

The Eastern Christian Philosophers had the same notion when they discussed about human freedom. According to them, it has six dimensions. These include freedom of person, freedom of society, man's freedom in one's own time, man's freedom of timelessness, transcending of all bondage, and freedom of doing well without any external pressures. These six levels can be considered as the expressions of God's image in human nature.

In the thought of St. Gregory of Nyssa, the word "human" encompasses all humans from the beginning. It is from this context that he tries to understand freedom. Human personality is rooted in gender differences. This gender difference and differentiation was not there in the beginning. Ultimately it will disappear, Mar Gregorios says. A man who commits $\sin$ is prone to death, and God having foreseen this has endowed man with birth and also gender differences. So full freedom involves freedom from birth and death and also from gender differences.

When we discuss about human freedom, normally two aspects are taken into account, the freedom from the things which annihilate or limit us, the idea of transcending all the limitations and barriers. A third dimension also comes in, where man is not a mere pure or simple part of God's creation but a co-creator of himself and his world. This is exactly a sense of discernment where one could choose the good or evil and the way of materializing it. There lies the ultimate state of freedom.

In line with this view, Mar Gregorios adds the idea of apatheia, a sense of disinterestedness. He contradicts the Stoic idea of apatheia as a state of freedom from the urge. For him it is not the mere refusal or mere avoidance. Mar Gregorios believes that man is created with purpose of experiencing both the materialistics and divine world. Here apatheia means a sense of discernment. Human beings are meant to
lead a mediating role between the materialistic and divine. This has been done in a creative way. Therefore, the real meaning of apatheia is the process of experiencing the good or attaining the higher state of goodness.

The word freedom also takes a different turn here. That is the state where one could enter in to the realm of God without any fear. Our sins dispel us from God's presence. Only the unblemished or blameless could enter in to the divine fold without any fear. That means one should maintain the transparency and stillness of mind for attaining this state. In the case of Adam and Eve it was only after committing the sin that they realized their nakedness and hid themselves behind the bush.

How can man enter the presence of God, who is by nature inaccessible and unknowable? In Eastern thought, God is present in the universe which has been willed by God. Though God is unknowable, he is accessible to man through his energia and acts. God has created man as the supreme ruler of all his creation. His bodily structure itself speaks of it. Animals use their front legs to support their heads, which are bowed down. In the case of man, he moves on two legs, with his head held high. The mouth and tongue of an animal is used to devour its food. Man's mouth and tongue and lips are meant to produce language, and to express the creativity of the mind and thus to enrich the human connections. Animals have horns, sharp and powerful tooth, of nails and speed of movement. Man though deprived of such things, is the ruler of those animals. It is symbolic of human freedom. It is not only in getting separated from the universe and getting united with God that freedom lies. It is in being very much here in this universe and in choosing goodness that freedom has been given to man.

God is the source of all goodness. Man who is created in God's image is also like that. It is for the creation of goodness that man rules over creation. It is by displaying God's goodness through creation that human freedom excels. God in his freedom create goodness; it is by creating goodness that man becomes similar to God, and gets his real freedom.

Mar Gregorios could prove that the philosophy of Gregory of Nyssa, who lived in the fourth century, was relevant to the twenty-first century also. The intellectual superiority and the originality of thinking; were effective in convincing this to the contemporary scholars.

## 4

## I have no qualification to untie his shoe lace!

## Dr. Cherian Eapen

As far as the knowledge and experience are concerned, I have no qualification to untie his shoe lace! But I had the blessings to closely associate with Gregorios Thirumeni, since 1967. In 90s I used to visit him every month and in the evenings had kanji and payar or dinner outside, when I go to some places via Delhi. Later I had to stay with him and then functioned as the organizing secretary and financier to the Rishikesh Religious Concord in 1993. During that process, I saw him talking to the highest Spiritual leaders of almost all religion, especially Hindu Spiritual Leaders with authority, not only on public meetings but also on private talks with them. I never saw him searching for any sacred aspects of their religions that they have cherished and could not be shared with. All of them including the chief of Vanaprasth Ashram respectfully listened to him admiring his knowledge and agreeing to his suggestions, and came to one platform to discuss with other religious leaders in his presence.

His written speech at a Marxist forum in 1988, made the hard core Marxists think widely on where they were standing! He said that their dogmas and old teachings cannot be sold in this modern world and will not have much value very soon! This lead to an open discussion between him and E.M. Sankaran Namoothiripad on Spirituality and Marxism. Now a stage has come where Christians are exposed to the world like Marxists. The fundamentals of Church beliefs are being questioned. Gregorios Thirumeni's absence is felt now.

There was an open discussion between E.M.S and Dr. K.N. Raj, the first Chairman of the Centre for Development Studies, on this theme in the journal Mainstream sometime in 1975. It continued for several weeks. That was on dialectical materialism. Raj said, Marx didn't say that religion is needed or not, but he said only that religion is an opium of man. EMS could counter all the arguments of Raj on
that subject and established that all religions are opium of man and he kept a view that Marx was against all religion. Later when Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios made an attack on Marxian Philosophy, EMS had to say: "To the Indian context, Marxism is Daridra Narayana Seva!" This was a drastic deviation from all his previous arguments, and even it is a deviated Marxian Philosophy. Later, in one of the Gregorios Memorial speeches, EMS also added that his proletarian organization and the early Christian Church have a lot of common things. The dialog started on Gregorios Thirumeni's paper: whether Secularism is needed in India or not. It was presented at a Marxist lead Trade Union conference in Calicut. This paper was then published in their Party daily Deshabhimani, and immediately came the answer from EMS. Then the dialog went on. The arguments of these two giants went into unassuming heights. For example, Gregorios Thirumeni argued that if you don't see something, it doesn't mean it doesn't exist. Then EMS answered, I am not going to make God out of those unseen things. But the basic question both were discussing was almost on the same thing: what is unma (truth)! This was then published by Chintha publishers. Sophia Centre, Kottayam also published it as a booklet. The booklet is in Malayalam.

I met Gregorios Thirumeni after his said resignation. He was in deep sorrow and agony. He told me, "There are very few people in my church that I can convince of my arguments!" He was frustrated and wanted to withdraw to a remote camp like the Motropolitan Theophan the Recluse. He purchased some land on the outskirts of Delhi and started to slowly building an Ashram, to move to that place for the rest of his life. But when he realized that he was going to be alone there, cut off from the public, without medical help, he kept the building process in abeyance. I think, nobody had supported that idea.Our church doesn't have Monasticism as an agenda, and no one (including him) has much training in that direction.

I regret that I didn't understand him at that time properly and helped him accordingly to fulfill that desire. Like, from the works of Metropolitan Theophan the Recluse, Christian churches and the world would then have been much richer with his theological and other scientific works and writings. (Bishop Theophan resigned from the Metropolitan-ship of the vast Vladimir region and the Rector-ship of the prestigious St. Peter's Burg Seminary, and spent 27 years in a
cell and produced valuable 1000 Theological works). But, Gregorios Thirumeni's Christian habit was focused more in social activities rather than in monastic isolation. He was more interested in practicing Socialist humanism, which he thought was the ideology that could bring us nearer to a just society. Perhaps that may be the reason why he found more humanity in the people like C. Achutha Menon and EMS Namboothirippad.

But Gregorios Thirumeni is the product of the Indian Orthodox church, and he was representing the present Church on various forums. On many occasions he received me in Pazhaya Seminary when I returned from my retreats at Kurisumala Ashram under the guidance of Rev. Francis Acharya. He arranged my stay at the Seminary and enthusiastically asked questions about my meditations and night vigil experiences etc. that I took in from the Ashram. I could only answer: "Peace"! One night, I listened to few of his problems till 3.00am, including those concerning church issues. I told him at one stage: "Thirumeni, I think, I cannot help you". He had a good laugh and said, "you have already helped me with your patient listening." Why he wanted to share all those important matters to this theologically illiterate man, who was sitting in front of him as a student, that too with the freedom that he had granted to me? Even now, I don't know it fully. During another private dinner at Delhi, I inquired: If Jesus Christ is the founder of the Church, why can't you leave the problems to Jesus Christ? He said: "I feel isolated and nobody in the church understands that" (Why did he want to walk in front of Jesus Christ? This remark was occasionally used by Mother Teresa, to stop her fire brand, enthusiastic volunteers, from jumping into certain impractical events).

In 1993, we conducted the World Religious concord at Rishikesh. He wrote me later that it was a super success event! During one of the early morning private sessions that we two had throughout our stay in the Vanaprasth Ashram, I told him to thank his church members and volunteers for supporting the event. He magnanimously acknowledged in public the leading role his church members who were a little bit unhappy on what was happening, and thought that they were not properly recognized. They even thought the agenda was a Hindu Agenda.

He always wanted to keep the identity of the Orthodox Church. In many circles, he was called a red bishop, a politician. At the same time no one should forget the role of his church by acknowledging him and making him a Priest, appointing him in the WCC, entrusting him the Principal-ship of the Orthodox Seminary and then finally anointing him as a Bishop etc. He was given the six foot land, together with the tombs of other senior Bishops, at the Seminary chapel itself, honoring his last will. Almost all his works are being published. There is an Award in his name, given to outstanding personalities, in Delhi. The first award was given to his friend, Dalai Lama. All these activities are supported by his church and his disciples. But with all respect to him, I doubt very much, whether he could have prevented the current split in his church!

Once I thought if this great self-made-person was born in Europe or America or in a Catholic Church, what would have been his position in the world! Of course, it is a matter of debate. I had the proud privilege for watching him in Moscow, sitting on the moderator's chair of a top secret discussion held between the Nuclear Scientists of both USA and Soviet Union sometime in 1985. It was one of the glorious contributions towards world peace, using his position in the WCC.

Swamy Vivekanandan was allowed to make a 5 minute speech at the world Religious conference in Chicago in 1893, which he made a historical one by the extended time. The same conference after a century was inaugurated by Gregorios Thirumeni. There are several other such unassuming roles he played in several world events.

So, he was a great lamp, lit by Jesus Christ! But that bright lamp didn't always have a proper stand. But a day would come when true Theologians in all religions would find his greatness. Like that of the 4th century Gregory of Nyssa, it need not happen in this century. This evaluation will continue, somehow somewhere, on his role in the Church, the body of Christ, its life, mission and charity. There will be so many vicks lit for him, not necessarily by his church members!

Let me give an example. Last month, during my short trip to India, when I met Justice V.R.Krishna Iyer at his residence in Ernakulam, he was remembering Gregorios Thirumeni. He reflected: "There is an absence of genuine persons in every sphere of our life. What a
loss to Christianity and to the country and to the world itself!" When I took Thirumeni for the first time to Justice Iyer's official residence in Delhi, while he was the Judge in the Supreme Court, sometime in 1976, the judge didn't give any importance to Thirumeni. He didn't even take his feet from the tea-poy and was looking at me and started talking. When I introduced him and when the discussions started, Justice Iyer asked about a book on his favorite theme, life after life. Thirumeni patiently explained the content of the book and its theme and then asked a question, whether he heard of a book Life before life! This discussion went on for hours and finally Thirumeni became his teacher. While in the car on the drive back home, Thirumeni expressed his opinion about the meeting: "I thought he was a tiger, but he seemed to be like a child!"

Gregorios Thirumeni was admired by many only from a distance, especially from his church. He was a fire to many who went near to him. Many people, even Priests and Bishops asked me how I could keep a friendship with him. The answer was: I got acquainted with him not through his church!

I would have heard the following quote of Vaclav Havel, from Gregorios Thirumeni first, if he was alive: "The salvation of this human world lies nowhere else than in the human heart, in the human power to reflect, in human modesty, and in human responsibility. Without a global revolution in the sphere of human copiousness, nothing will change for the better"

About the present crisis in the Church, I have shuttled between Damascus and Kottayam several times to explore the possibilities for a peace formula. I found it is impossible at the present set up. One has to accept the reality! There is no administrative unity possible between the two Orthodox Church factions. The latest trend in the world is that the Christian churches are withering away! Our Orthodox Church has been divided almost like the division of the Communist party in India, forty years back. Still, many people are there in both the sides, who cannot understand why they should stand as separate political parties and fight for the cause of poor and needy together, if their goals are genuine. When the leadership and the members became corrupt, the division was inevitable. The ideology was left behind. They didn't speak of any Spiritual reasons for the division, as their ideology was based on dialectical materialism. But how can the two
factions of the Christian Church founded by Jesus Christ and supposed to be governed by the Holy Spirit, fight in the street? Either they are not feeling as the part of the body of Christ or there is no Holy Spirit in the Church!

Apostle St. Paul says in his letter to Corinthians: "..there must be divisions among you so that the ones who are in the right may be clearly seen." While we are all waiting to see the right ones, Apostle appeals to all of us: "By the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ I appeal to all of you, my brothers, to agree in what you say, so that there will be no divisions among you. Be completely united, with only one thought and one purpose."

St. Ephraim the Syrian, representing the pure Christianity, made his prayer almost 1700 years ago: "O Lord and Master of my life! Grant not unto me a spirit of idleness, of discouragement, of lust of power, and of vain speaking! But bestow upon me, Your servant, the spirit of chastity, of meekness, of patience and of love! Yes, O Lord and King, grant that I may perceive my own transgressions, and judge not my brother!"

Let not our faith divided! Let not our hope faded! Let not our love diminished!

We need healthy discussion. No doubt. Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios told me once "It is easy for me to cooperate with different religious leadership for inter-religious dialogues than dealing with different sections of Christian Churches and believers." He told me ever since the church was formed, there were difference of opinions. We can see that even St. Paul criticizes St. Peter in our Bible. Does it mean that St. Paul didn't respect St. Peter? No! If we learn the history of the formation of the Christian Creed (Symbol of our Faith), you can see how much differences of opinion the Christians had. Now we have almost $1 / 3$ rd population of Christians. Out of this, Rev. Billy Graham claims that he had converted 160 Million people to Christianity. It is a great number for an individual. No doubt, he has got a special place in the Christian church history. But when you calculate the total number of Christianslived after the formation of the mother church in Israel, and when youcalculate the percentage of that with the existing 2000 Million Christians in the world, you can see that there were greater people than Rev. Billy Graham who worked silently
and formed Churches in different parts of the world and prescribed an Order to maintain the faith, facing all bitter and deadly tests.

What we need is healthy criticisms with full respect and understanding of the other person or the Church he represents and mostly with Christian love. Here is where Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios's greatest contribution lies. Nobody in the world had ever done such an attempt to bring all the Christians together than him. He was disappointed on many occasions, but he was praying and every day working in that direction. Many occasions, his intellectual deliberations were not accepted even by his own Church. He taught the politicians that they should learn from the Enlightenment liberalism, Imperialist pragmatism, and Socialist humanism, while avoiding the downside of these philosophies. Well, it is only with collaboration and interaction with other Churches alone one can attempt to make differences bring down, in his own heart. The basic law should be love of Jesus!

Well, one should not underestimate the influence of the geographical contemplative traditions. Pope Paul VI said: "The Non-Christian religions carry within them the echo of thousands of years of searching for God.

They have taught generations of people how to pray. They are all impregnated by innumerable Seeds of the World and can constitute a true preparation for the Gospel...In the mind of Lord the Church is Universal by vocation and mission; but when she puts down her roots in a variety of cultural, social and human terrains, she takes on different external expressions in each part of the world..." We have lot of things to learn from here.

So, till the end of our life we have to search for the truth. That is how the Creator molded us in this world! We need the Protestants fervor, Catholic monastic discipline and Orthodox celebrations in our personal Christian faith. Yet it is not complete. Centuries before Christ, the Spirit made a certain section of people to pray: "From untruth lead me to the truth. From darkness lead me to light. From death lad me to immortality". We need to form such groups who can write such prayers. May the good God bless all of you and continue a healthy discussions, because I am also learning from all of you! Each one of you have unique talents and it is important to our Lord!


[^0]:    * the relics of the martyrs were respected and treasured by

